"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

LATE EDITION

Today, sunny to partly cloudy, warm, breezy afternoon, high 81. **Tonight,** mostly cloudy, low 58. **Tomorrow,** mostly sunny, breezy, cooler, high 66. Weather map is on Page B12.

VOL. CLXXII .... No. 59,790 © 2023 The New York Times Company NEW YORK, TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2023 $4.00



SERGEY PONOMAREV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Posters of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Istanbul. He fell just short of a majority in Sunday's election, forcing a May 28 runoff.

Tugging Hearts to Raise $89 Million, but Sending A Scant 1% to the Causes

By DAVID A. FAHRENTHOLD, TIFF FEHR and CHARLIE SMART

The phone rings. The caller knows your name, and opens with a dad joke.

'Carla? Finally, it's good to hear a kind voice. That last call was tougher on me than my mother-in-law's meatloaf. (chuckles) I'm only kidding.'

He is asking for donations, to help a group that helps the police.

'This is Frank Wallace calling for the American Police Officers Alliance. Very quickly, we're mailing out the envelopes to help fight for our officers who protect our nation's citizens, just like yourself. Once you receive your card in the mail, you can send back whatever you think is fair this time. That's all.'

This is not a policeman. This is not even a human. This is a computer, making thousands of robocalls with the same folksy voice.

And like "Frank Wallace," the American Police Officers Alliance is not what it seems.

In theory, it is a political nonprofit called a 527, after a section of the tax code, that can raise unlimited donations to help or oppose candidates, promote issues or encourage voting.

In reality, it is part of a group of five linked nonprofits that have exploited thousands of donors in ways that have been hidden until now by a blizzard of filings, lax oversight and a blind spot in the campaign finance system.

Since 2014, the five groups have pulled in $89 million from small-dollar donors who were pitched on building political support for police officers, veterans and firefighters.

But just 1 percent of the money they raised was used to help candidates via donations, ads or targeted get-out-the-vote messages, according to an analysis by The New York Times of the groups' public filings.

About 90 percent of the money the groups raised was simply sent back to their fund-raising contractors, to feed a self-consuming loop where donations went to find more donors to give money to find more donors. They had no significant operations other than fundraising, and along the way became one of America's biggest sources of robocalls.

It is not clear why the groups plowed so much of what they raised back into more fund-raising calls; compared with other political nonprofits, their fund-raising expenditures were extraordinarily high.

But one other set of expenditures was especially notable: The groups also paid $2.8 million, or 3 percent of the money raised, to three Republican political consultants from Wisconsin who were the hidden force behind all five nonprofits, according to people who worked for the groups and who in some cases were kept in the dark by the consultants about the finances of the operations.

Those three consultants helped

Continued on Page A16

Fears of Chaos At Border Ease As Arrivals Ebb

By MICHAEL D. SHEAR

WASHINGTON — Two days before officials lifted the Title 42 pandemic restrictions at the southern border, President Biden gave a blunt assessment of his administration's ability to manage the surge of migrants they expected to arrive last week.

"It's going to be chaotic for a while," Mr. Biden predicted grimly.

When the time came, what Republicans had insisted would be a career-ending moment for Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas did not fully turn into the chaos Mr. Biden and others had anticipated.

An initial surge of about 10,000 migrants just hours before the rule expired on Thursday put a fresh strain on already full detention facilities and shelters, and scenes of migrants, some with no place to sleep but a sidewalk, underscored the searing reality of a broken immigration system.

But that was followed by a marked slowdown in migration across the 2,000-mile border with Mexico.

"America can manage this moment and we know how to do it in a manner that is both orderly and just, reflecting our values, interests and the rule of law," said Vanessa Cárdenas, the executive director of America's Voice, a liberal pro-immigration group in Washington.

Still, she said the Biden administration should not "buy into Republicans' vision that this is a perpetual crisis that requires perpetual enforcement-only policies."

The end of Title 42 after three years was a reminder — as if anyone on the border needed one — of the vulnerabilities in the nation's immigration system, which is already far beyond its capacity to deal with the number of migrants fleeing their homes and to determine who can stay and who should be deported.

But the weekend also underscored the ability of federal authorities, local governments and private nonprofits to temporarily triage the situation.

The administration sent 1,500 troops to the border to help free up more Border Patrol agents. Cities declared emergencies and opened extra shelters for migrants needing a place to sleep. Churches and other nonprofit groups received grant money from the Federal

Continued on Page A20

NEWS ANALYSIS

Erdogan's Grip on Power Loosens, but It Holds

By BEN HUBBARD

ANKARA, Turkey — Soaring inflation left his people feeling poorer. His government was accused of botching its response to catastrophic earthquakes that killed more than 50,000 people just three months ago. And he faced a newly unified opposition that promised to reverse his steady drift toward one-man rule.

Despite all of that, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan came out with a lead over his main challenger in Turkish elections, according to official results released on Monday. Though he fell just short of an outright majority, sending the nation to a runoff on May 28, there are strong signs pointing to yet another Erdogan

While Some Turks Vent at Polls, Leader Is Still Poised for Victory

victory in that vote.

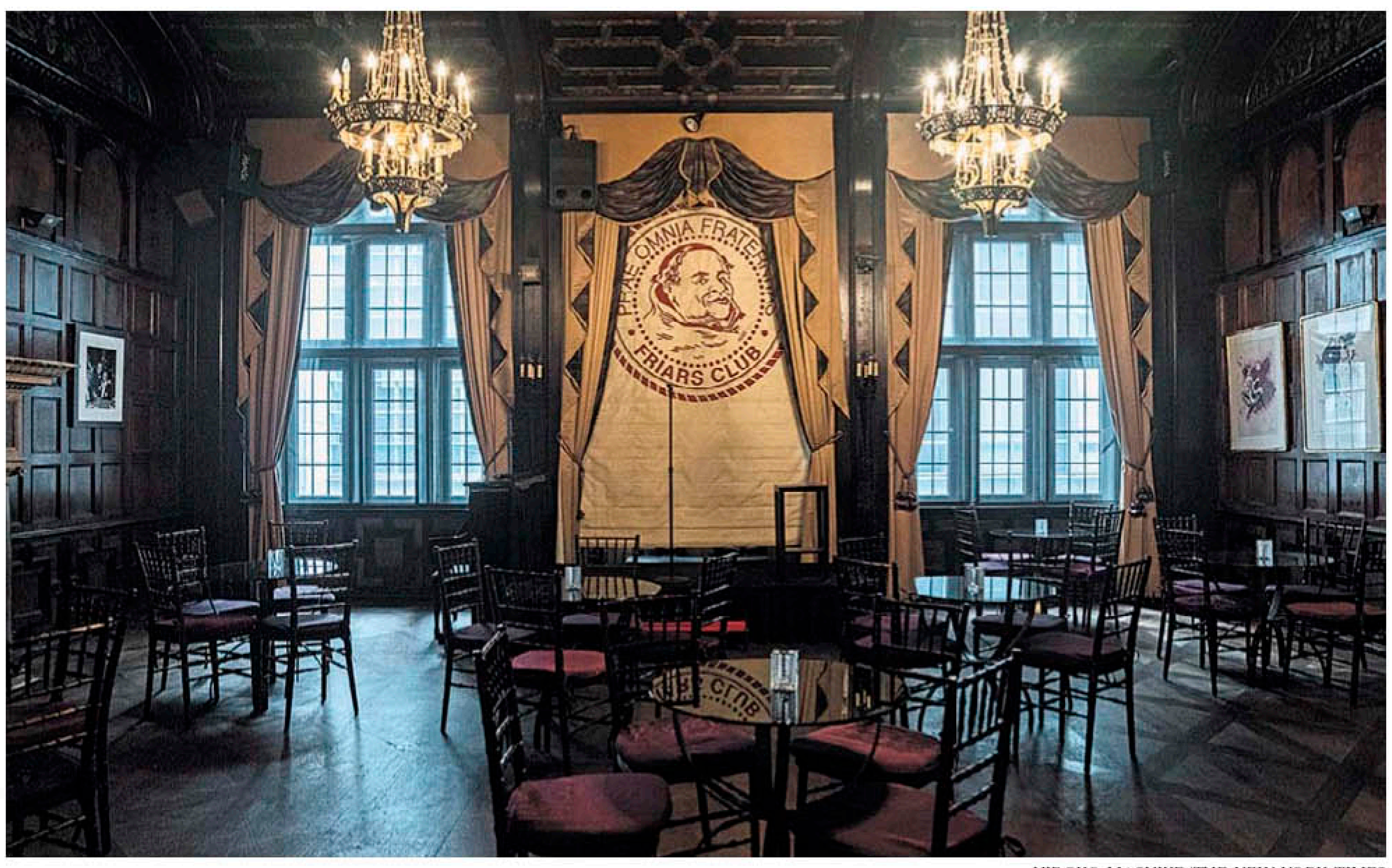
"For Erdogan, this is his greatest finale," said Mehmet Ali Kulat, a prominent Turkish pollster who had foreseen a stronger showing by the opposition.

With nearly all of the ballots counted on Monday, official preliminary results gave Mr. Erdogan 49.5 percent of the vote versus 44.9 percent for his main challenger, opposition leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu. A third candidate, Sinan Ogan, received 5.2 percent, and his right-wing supporters are more likely to vote for Mr. Erdogan in the runoff, analysts say. Finally, Mr. Erdogan's party and its allies maintained a commanding majority in the parliamentary vote, likely further increasing his ability to be re-elected.

But the fact that Mr. Erdogan could not win more than 50 percent of the vote, even after he used many of his levers of power to tilt the playing field to his advantage, indicates that some voters have tired of his financial management and the drastic consolidation of power in his own hands.

Many Turkish news outlets are owned by pro-Erdogan businessmen, ensuring that they provided a steady stream of exultant

Continued on Page A6



HIROKO MASUIKE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Friars Club in Manhattan has celebrated entertainers for decades, but now it is up for sale.

Haven of Cigars and Laughs Seeks a Savior

By JULIA JACOBS

Foreclosure Is Looming for the Friars Club

One of the final episodes of "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel," released this month, captured the bawdy, profanity-laced ritual that was a celebrity roast at New York's Friars Club — the kind of entertainment that helped make the club the buzzing epicenter of the comedy world.

But these days the landmark home of wisecracks and cigar smoke, and legends like Milton Berle and Jerry Lewis, is trying to fight off extinction.

A loan company has moved to foreclose on the club after it missed payments on a $13 million mortgage. And a federal judge is mulling whether to appoint an outside company to take over the Friars Club's six-story townhouse on East 55th Street, which has been shuttered for months as the club's financial problems have deepened.

An inspection in March by the loan company described a building marred by mounds of trash, signs of mice and roaches, mold damage and containers of "un-

Continued on Page A24

Durham Slams F.B.I. as Biased In Trump Case

*This article is by **Charlie Savage, Glenn Thrush, Adam Goldman** and **Katie Benner**.*

WASHINGTON — John Durham, the Trump-era special counsel who for four years has pursued a politically fraught investigation into the Russia inquiry, accused the F.B.I. of having "discounted or willfully ignored material information that did not support the narrative of a collusive relationship between Trump and Russia" in a final report made public on Monday.

Mr. Durham's 306-page report revealed little substantial new information about the inquiry, known as Crossfire Hurricane, and it failed to produce the kinds of blockbuster revelations impugning the bureau of politically motivated misconduct that former President Donald J. Trump and his allies suggested Mr. Durham would uncover.

Instead, the report — released without substantive comment or any redactions by Attorney General Merrick B. Garland — largely recounted previously exposed flaws in the inquiry, while concluding that the F.B.I. suffered from confirmation bias and a "lack of analytical rigor" as it pursued leads about Mr. Trump's ties to Russia.

"An objective and honest assessment of these strands of information should have caused the F.B.I. to question not only the predication for Crossfire Hurricane, but also to reflect on whether the F.B.I. was being manipulated for political or other purposes," he wrote. "Unfortu-

Continued on Page A21



RACHEL WISNIEWSKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The president has been advocating trade apprenticeships.

Biden Promotes Quality Careers Minus a Degree

By ZOLAN KANNO-YOUNGS

PHILADELPHIA — When President Biden told a crowd of union workers this year that every American should have a path to a good career — "whether they go to college or not" — Tyler Wissman was listening.

A father of one with a high school education, Mr. Wissman said he rarely heard politicians say that people should be able to get ahead without a college degree.

"In my 31 years, it was always, 'You gotta go to college if you want a job,'" said Mr. Wissman, who is training as an apprentice at the Finishing Trades Institute in Philadelphia, where the president spoke in March.

As Mr. Biden campaigns for re-election, he is trying to bridge an educational divide that is reshaping the American political landscape. Even though both political parties portray education as crucial for advancement and opportunity, college-educated voters

Continued on Page A19



BUSINESS B1-5

Online Shopping Comes Alive

Start-ups and big tech names are betting Americans will tune in to sales pitches online. PAGE B1

Vice Files for Bankruptcy

The digital publisher, once a new-media darling, struggled to adjust to the punishing realities of its industry. PAGE B1

INTERNATIONAL A4-14

U.S. Tech Winds Up in Russia

Russian customs data shows that millions of dollars of aircraft parts made by Boeing, Airbus and others were imported despite sanctions. PAGE A10

Living 'The Diplomat' Life

America's ambassador to Britain says several top officials have called her to discuss the hit show on Netflix. PAGE A7

ARTS C1-8

Nothing if Not Ambitious

A six-hour opera, "Stranger Love," will debut on Saturday with a single performance in Los Angeles. PAGE C1



SCIENCE TIMES D1-8

Don't Count Your Condors

To help an endangered bird species breed, scientists are fooling them into sitting on electronic eggs. PAGE D8

Pulling DNA From Thin Air

A new technique to collect trace amounts of genetic material poses civil liberties dilemmas. PAGE D1

NATIONAL A15-21, 24

Congressman's Aides Attacked

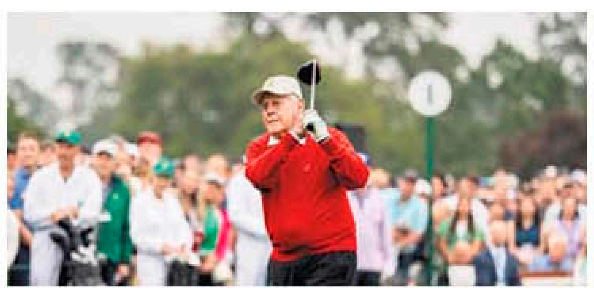
A man armed with a baseball bat went on a rampage at the Fairfax office of Representative Gerald E. Connolly, a Virginia Democrat. Two staff members were hospitalized. PAGE A21

Chicago's New Mayor Speaks

Brandon Johnson, a progressive Democrat who was sworn in on Monday, explained how he is planning to address big challenges around policing, education and a downtown recovery. PAGE A15

OPINION A22-23

Michelle Goldberg PAGE A23



SPORTS B6-9

A Legend Mulls Golf's Future

Jack Nicklaus, an 18-time major winner, talked with The Times near the 60th anniversary of his first P.G.A. Championship victory. PAGES B6-7

0 354613 9

VISIT…

LANZAROTE Caliente.COM

Inside The Times

The New York Times

A. G. SULZBERGER
Publisher

Founded in 1851

ADOLPH S. OCHS
Publisher 1896-1935

ARTHUR HAYS SULZBERGER
Publisher 1935-1961

ORVIL E. DRYFOOS
Publisher 1961-1963

ARTHUR OCHS SULZBERGER
Publisher 1963-1992

ARTHUR OCHS SULZBERGER JR.
Publisher 1992-2017

NEWS

JOSEPH KAHN
Executive Editor

MARC LACEY
Managing Editor

CAROLYN RYAN
Managing Editor

SAM DOLNICK
Deputy Managing Editor

MONICA DRAKE
Deputy Managing Editor

STEVE DUENES
Deputy Managing Editor

CLIFFORD LEVY
Deputy Managing Editor

MATTHEW ERICSON
Assistant Managing Editor

HANNAH POFERL
Assistant Managing Editor

SAM SIFTON
Assistant Managing Editor

KARRON SKOG
Assistant Managing Editor

MICHAEL SLACKMAN
Assistant Managing Editor

OPINION

KATHLEEN KINGSBURY
Opinion Editor

PATRICK HEALY
Deputy Opinion Editor

BUSINESS

MEREDITH KOPIT LEVIEN
Chief Executive Officer

DIANE BRAYTON
General Counsel

ROLAND A. CAPUTO
Chief Financial Officer

JACQUELINE M. WELCH
Chief Human Resources Officer

WILLIAM T. BARDEEN
Chief Strategy Officer

R. ANTHONY BENTEN
Chief Accounting Officer, Treasurer

ALEXANDRA HARDIMAN
Chief Product Officer

DAVID S. PERPICH
Publisher, The Athletic and Wirecutter

JOY ROBINS
Global Chief Advertising Officer

DAVID RUBIN
Chief Marketing and Communications Officer

JASON SOBEL
Chief Technology Officer

HANNAH YANG
Chief Growth Officer

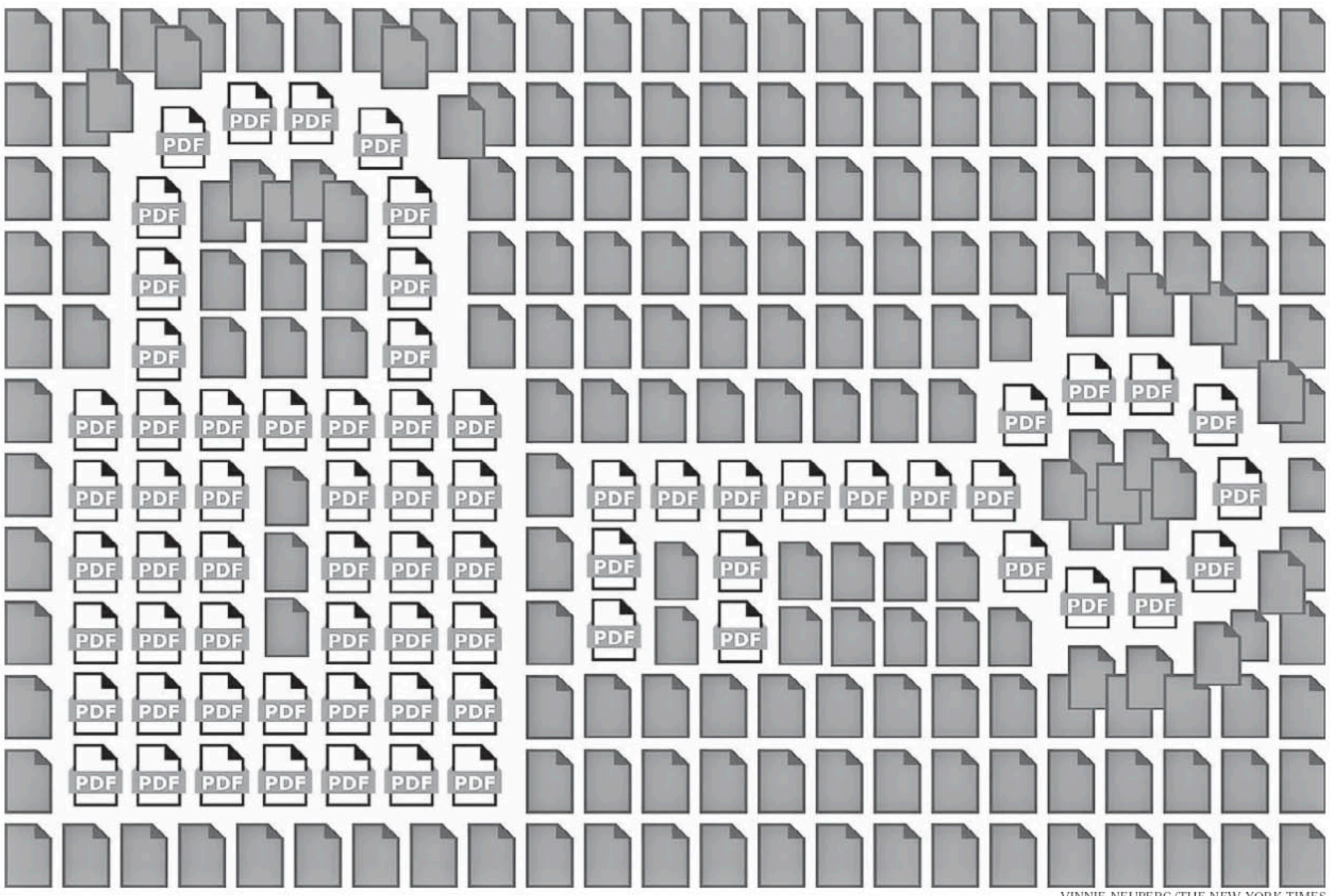
Contact the Newsroom
To contact the newsroom regarding correction requests, please email corrections@nytimes.com.

Submit a Letter to the Editor
letters@nytimes.com

Send a Confidential News Tip
Reach us through tools that will help protect your anonymity at nytimes.com/tips.

Contact Customer Care
customercare@nytimes.com or call 1-800-NYTIMES (1-800-698-4637)

The Story Behind the Story



VINNIE NEUBERG/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Finding Order in a Thicket of Nonprofit Data

By TIFF FEHR
Tiff Fehr is a staff engineer and project editor on the Interactive News team.

Data journalists such as myself struggle with one ever-present challenge: working with PDFs, the portable file formats unleashed by Adobe in the 1990s that are now ubiquitous barnacles on our digital lives.

Most of us have encountered PDFs when sending an application, checking a utility statement or perusing an online menu. And while converting a document into a PDF can preserve how it looks — resolving differences between devices, fonts or layouts — there are trade-offs to achieving portability.

In a "good" PDF, readers can select and copy text, click links or even fill out a form. But more often we deal with "bad" PDFs, those that are essentially photos of the original document. The text and data within the PDF are inaccessible to readers unless they use special extraction tools.

My nerdier peers on the Interactive News team at The New York Times and I often hear from reporters who are encountering "bad" PDFs while gathering source material. Frequently, their messages include variations on an ominous phrase: "Here's the problem. . . ."

My colleague David A. Fahrenthold, an investigative reporter in the Washington bureau who covers nonprofits, sent me one notable here's-the-problem email last fall. He was investigating the finances of a group of five tax-exempt political nonprofits called 527s, named after the section of the tax code that governs them, and was having trouble extracting data from a handful of PDFs from the Internal Revenue Service. The nonprofits in question were alleged to have hidden self-serving business dealings by dicing their I.R.S. filings into thousands of individual expenses — far too many for one donor, tax auditor or journalist to easily evaluate.

We needed to dig into the nonprofits' I.R.S. filings to assess the patterns. But stuck within 15,851 cumulative pages of "bad" PDFs (we counted) was data we could use to reconstruct their financial claims.

Our investigation into these five groups is in today's newspaper. Our analysis of their public information revealed patterns. Using robocalls, the group of nonprofits raised $89 million in small donations from unsuspecting donors who thought they were contributing to political funds supporting veterans and police officers. But most of the small donations were funneled into yet more fund-raising, and 3 percent — $2.8 million — was paid to companies owned by the three political consultants behind the nonprofits.

To reach those conclusions, David and I first had to download all of the available PDFs for these nonprofits from the I.R.S. and double- and triple-check them. I wrote code to analyze each PDF and extract every reported donation and expense — more than 136,000 transactions over nine years.

After untangling the transactions, the task was, relatively, simple. The key to unwinding the 527 groups' questionable practices came down to pivot tables, a feature that is most likely used by both amateurs and professional spreadsheet aficionados. A pivot table is a common tool to organize a table of information by a theme, like all expenditures summed by year or all donations grouped by the donor's home state.

For this investigation, we organized the expenses by recipient, to see which companies received the most from the nonprofits. Separately, David researched the companies directly connected to one or more of the nonprofit founders. (In statements, the four nonprofits still operating denied wrongdoing and said they were helping candidates indirectly by raising grass-roots issues with voters.)

These types of investigations are not the only instances when Times reporters run into challenging financial data.

From the multiyear investigation into the Trump family's business (and taxes) to everyday stories about people who are caught fudging aid programs or tax credits, our reporting and data journalism practices continue to resemble forensic accounting, a specialty area of accounting that unravels financial crimes like fraud, embezzlement or Ponzi schemes.

Banking scandals, tax evasion, official inquiries and bankruptcies typically include financial details with mind-boggling figures. The newsroom's financial and accounting acumen becomes more complex and intensive when we can obtain the raw data behind those numbers, and make sense of them as we did with the 527 filings.

The skill set that data journalists need to accurately report on opaque finances is expanding as the availability of public data evolves. The number of data journalists at The Times is growing as well, with dozens involved in data journalism across many desks; Graphics, Investigations, Climate and Elections, to name a few.

My colleagues on the Interactive News team and I continually assess where and when new techniques are a responsible fit for the newsroom's needs, and lie in wait for the next chance to pair our growing accounting skills with investigative reporting.

The Newspaper and Beyond

TODAY'S PAPER

Corrections A24
Crossword C3
Obituaries B10-11
Opinion A22-23
Weather B12
Classified Ads B8







AUDIO
The latest playlist from our pop music critics includes a track from Dolly Parton's upcoming rock album "Rockstar," and new recordings by Jorja Smith, Rhiannon Giddens, Shakira and more. Listen at *nytimes.com/music.*

GUIDE
Rotterdam, the second-largest city in the Netherlands, is Europe's busiest port and a hub of avant-garde architecture. In a recent installment of the Travel series 36 Hours, find an itinerary for a trip to the city, including suggestions for cultural and culinary attractions. *nytimes.com/travel*

ADVICE
Is it OK if I don't contribute to a wedding gift for a co-worker? What can I do about colleagues who make distracting noises? The Times's Work Friend columnist, Roxane Gay, answers questions about the office and careers. Send your queries to *workfriend@nytimes.com.*

Quote of the Day

"I'd boo myself too with the amount of money I'm making."

CARLOS CORREA, *a shortstop for the Minnesota Twins, who struggled through the first quarter of the Major League Baseball season after signing a $200 million deal in the off-season. Page B9.*

Today's Top Trending Headlines

Is Everyone Playing Padel Without Us? A new sports craze may give pickleball a run for its money. For Styles, Amelia Nierenberg reported from Santiago, Chile, where padel — one of the fastest-growing sports in the world — has become a national obsession. There are about 600 padel clubs in Chile, and new ones are emerging. Ms. Nierenberg interviewed players about padel's rise during the pandemic and why the sport could catch on in the United States.

Vice, Decayed Digital Colossus, Files for Bankruptcy Vice Media filed for bankruptcy on Monday, a cautionary tale of the problems facing the digital publishing industry. A group of Vice's lenders is in the leading position to acquire the company out of bankruptcy and has submitted a bid of $225 million. Times reporters described the recent struggles of other media companies, including BuzzFeed, which shut down its namesake Pulitzer Prize-winning news division last month.

Inside the Last Old-School Seltzer Shop in New York Long before LaCroix or Spindrift, there was Brooklyn Seltzer Boys. Corey Kilgannon, a reporter on the Metro desk, visited New York's last old-school seltzer shop to see how the business is keeping up with the times. After nearly closing for good during the pandemic, Brooklyn Seltzer moved, (somewhat) modernized its factory and built a museum space with a spritzing station to introduce its fizzy water to younger generations.

At 81, Martha Stewart Is the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue Cover Star "It's useless to try to pigeonhole Martha Stewart," wrote Ruth La Ferla of the business mogul and television personality who appears on the cover of the Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue. Ms. La Ferla interviewed Ms. Stewart about her photo shoot, sexual confidence and ongoing process of "self-creation."

A Headline From History

FIRST AIR MAIL IN WASHINGTON IN 200 MINUTES

May 16, 1918. Snail mail had gotten a little faster, The Times reported. The previous day, the first airplane mail service in the world occurred between New York and Washington. Lt. Torrey H. Webb took off in Belmont Park at 11:30 in the morning with 144 pounds of mail and arrived in Philadelphia an hour later. Then, "the mail was relayed through the air by Lt. James C. Edgerton, who delivered it in Washington at 2:50 p.m." The total flying time of the two couriers, minus the six-minute exchange in Philadelphia, was three hours and 20 minutes. Two pouches contained 2,457 pieces of mail; with the exception of three packages and the previous day's copy of The New York Times, the mail was all letters. Alan R. Hawley, the president of the Aero Club of America, called the moment historic and said the successful trip would be "the forerunner of a network of aerial mail lines which will cover the entire world."

THE NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY
620 Eighth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10018-1405

The New York Times (ISSN 0362-4331) is published daily. Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to The New York Times, 620 Eighth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10018-1405.

Mail Subscription Rates*	1 Yr.	6 Mos.
Daily and Sunday	$1196.00	$598.00
Monday-Saturday	1092.00	546.00
Sunday only	624.00	312.00
Times Book Review	$286.00	
Large Print Weekly	$166.40	

Higher rates, available on request, for mailing outside the U.S., or for the New York edition outside the Northeast: 1-800-631-2580.

**Not including state or local tax.*

The Times occasionally makes its list of home delivery subscribers available to marketing partners or third parties who offer products or services that are likely to interest its readers. If you prefer that we do not share this information, please notify Customer Service, 620 Eighth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10018-1405, or email help@nytimes.com.

All advertising published in The New York Times is subject to the applicable rate card, available from the advertising department. The Times reserves the right not to accept an advertiser's order. Only publication of an advertisement shall constitute final acceptance.
© 2023, The New York Times Company. All rights reserved.

A. G. Sulzberger, *Publisher*
Meredith Kopit Levien, *President and Chief Executive Officer*
R. Anthony Benten, *Treasurer*
Michael A. Brown, *Corporate Secretary*

Facts of Interest

A publication of research this year found that Black taxpayers were three to five times more likely than taxpayers who are not Black to be audited by the I.R.S.

The I.R.S. Acknowledges Black Americans Face Audits At a Higher Rate B4

The Colorado Party — the dominant, right-wing political force in Paraguay — has controlled the country for 71 of the past 76 years, including four decades of military dictatorship.

Chicken, Noodles and Cash: Paying for Votes in Paraguay A4

Some research suggests that one in three new mothers experienced postpartum depression in the early days of the pandemic.

More Help for Women At a Tough Time D6

Each of the 12 Federal Reserve Banks has a nine-person board of directors. Three of the directors come from banks; the rest come from financial companies, businesses, and labor and community groups.

Fed Ties to S.V.B. Chief Attract Scrutiny To Century-Old Setup B1

Britain provided about $2.8 billion in military aid to Ukraine in 2022, making it the country's largest backer after the United States and Germany.

Zelensky's European Tour Ends In Britain With a Promise Of More Arms A10

With around a fourth of the Major League Baseball season complete, the average game is 27 minutes shorter than it was last season.

What We Have Learned After a Quarter of the Season B9

Only one woman, Dr. Bernadine P. Healy, has led the National Institutes of Health on a permanent basis.

A Cancer Surgeon and Patient Is Biden's Choice to Lead N.I.H A24

The Mini Crossword

1	2	3	■	■
4			5	6
7				
8				
9				

5/16/2023 BY JOEL FAGLIANO

ACROSS

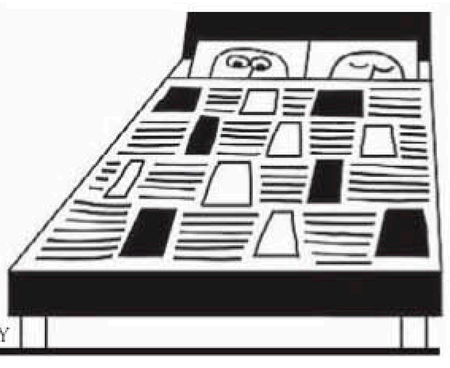
1 With 1-Down, small thing that really bothers you
4 Skip over in pronouncing
7 It might have an "Unsubscribe" button
8 Action words
9 Undo pencil marks

DOWN

1 See 1-Across
2 ___ Fudd, cartoon hunter
3 Headwear for a princess
5 First claim
6 "What ___ is new"

SOLUTION TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

G	R	A	S	S
M	O	N	T	H
C	O	V	E	R
■	F	I	V	E
■	S	L	E	D



MARCUS OAKLEY

Reader Corner

Callout: How has your job changed during the pandemic?

The coronavirus pandemic has transformed the way many Americans work. Some workers have adopted hybrid remote work or worked significantly longer hours. Others have simply left their jobs in search of better pay or work-life balance.

If your experience at work has changed during the pandemic, the Business team at The New York Times would love to hear from you.

We are interested in everything, from the professional steps you took in the last three years — like asking for a raise — to larger changes you've seen in your workplace. Have you left a job or switched careers? Have you cut back or increased the amount of time you spent working? Have you gone back to the office, asked for a promotion or connected with co-workers in new ways?

To share your story with us, fill out our form at nytimes.com/readercenter.

In Our Inbox

Excerpts From New York Times Newsletters



TING SHEN/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

Ajay Banga will formally take over leadership of the World Bank on June 2.

President Biden recently nominated Ajay Banga, a business executive, to lead the World Bank, an organization whose mission is to help countries develop sustainably and reduce poverty. For years, though, the bank has been accused of being insufficiently responsive to the needs of countries battered by climate change and heavy debt. To learn what may lie ahead, Manuela Andreoni, a writer for Climate Forward, interviewed Rachel Kyte, the dean of the Fletcher School of international affairs at Tufts University and a former World Bank vice president. Read an edited excerpt from their exchange.

Can you give one example of what people want the bank to do?

About half of the countries in Africa at the moment, about 60 percent of low-income emerging market countries, are debt distressed. But what's different about this debt crisis than the one we had 20 or 30 years ago is that the debt is not just owned by the West. The creditors are countries like China. A large part of the debt is also held by private equity or private banks. One of the things that's going to happen is that the World Bank will have to find a new way to resolve this. It's very important that he knows all of these private financiers.

Are there any measures you think he will take right away?

A lot of people talked about the culture of the bank. It's packed full of really smart people. As a manager, what's the tone from the top that you can send that empowers people to take risks, to be client focused, to be solutions-oriented? It'll be interesting to see how quickly his managerial style takes hold.

Can the bank encourage wealthy nations to deliver the climate aid they promised to developing countries?

The bank can turn around to donors and say, Here is another creative way to do it. If you do this, you will save yourself hundreds of millions of dollars in costs incurred in humanitarian aid and responses to disasters. The bank has to be an advocate for smart development, smart climate action. That's what people are looking for Ajay to do.

Subscribe to Climate Forward at nytimes.com/newsletters.

Here to Help

A Recipe for Crisp Gnocchi With Sausage and Peas

This quick skillet dinner combines crisp gnocchi and brawny sausage with sweet pops of peas and herbs. It tastes like spring, but it can be prepared perennially — and without any chopping or waiting for water to boil. (That's right, you don't need to boil the gnocchi before searing.) Draped in a combination of mustard and melted Parmesan, the dish is creamy, with a salty bite like cacio e pepe. If plush Alfredo is what you're craving, you could add a splash of heavy cream along with the browned gnocchi in Step 4. ALI SLAGLE

TIME: 25 MINUTES
YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more as needed
- 1 (12- to 18-ounce) package shelf-stable potato gnocchi
- 1 pound hot or sweet Italian sausage, casings removed
- 2 cups/10 ounces frozen peas (no need to thaw)
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- ½ cup/1 ounce grated Parmesan, plus more for serving
- Kosher salt (such as Diamond Crystal) and black pepper
- ½ cup torn dill, mint or basil leaves, plus more for serving

1. In a large (12-inch) nonstick or well-seasoned cast-iron skillet, heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium-high. Break up any stuck-together gnocchi and add to the skillet in an even layer. Cover and cook, undisturbed, until the gnocchi are golden brown underneath and unstuck from skillet, 2 to 4 minutes. Cook, stirring, until crisp on both sides, 2 to 3 minutes. If the gnocchi are burning instead of browning or the skillet looks dry, add more oil. Transfer to a bowl or plate.

2. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons oil to the skillet, still over medium-high. Add the sausage and break into small pieces. Cook, undisturbed, until sausage is browned, 2 to 4 minutes. Stir and cook until the sausage is cooked through, another 2 to 4 minutes.

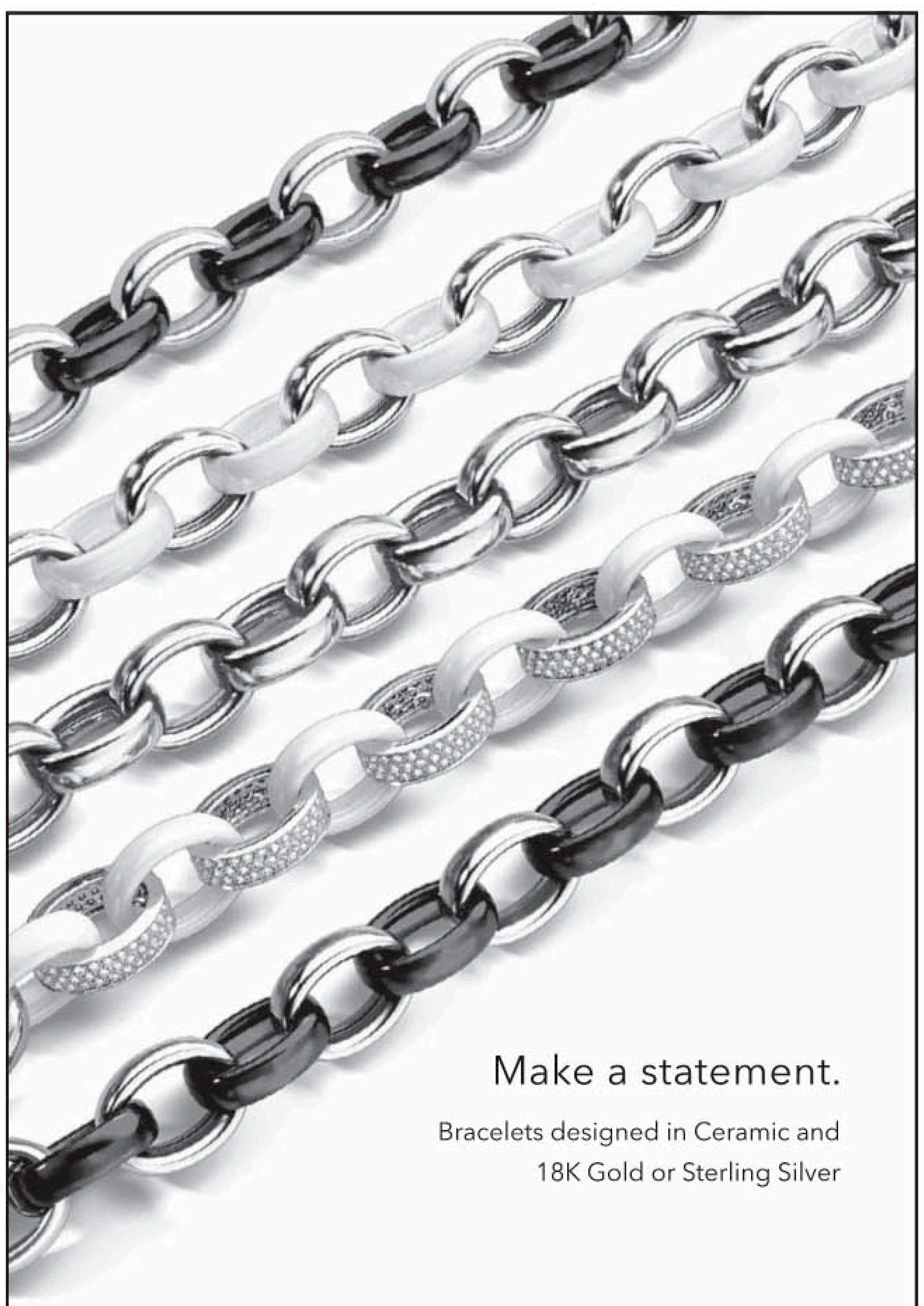


DAVID MALOSH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES FOOD STYLIST: SIMON ANDREWS

3. Stir in the peas, mustard and ½ cup water, and scrape up the browned bits on the skillet. (It may not look like a lot of liquid, but the peas will release some as they cook.) Simmer until the peas are cooked through, 2 to 4 minutes.

4. Add the browned gnocchi and the Parmesan; stir until the cheese has melted. Season to taste with salt and pepper, then stir in the herbs. Serve topped with more herbs, Parmesan and black pepper, as desired.

For more recipes, visit New York Times Cooking at nytcooking.com.



Make a statement.
Bracelets designed in Ceramic and 18K Gold or Sterling Silver

MONICA RICH KOSANN

Please call 866.598.2784 or Visit Us at MONICARICHKOSANN.COM

10 IRRESISTIBLE DAYS MAY 11-21
ALLURING OFFERS ON ALL NEW COLLECTIONS



Dolphin. Armchair, designed by Cédric Ragot.

roche bobois PARIS

Make sense of the news, every day, with David Leonhardt.

The Morning
A Newsletter

Sign up for the newsletter nytimes.com/themorning

The New York Times

International

The New York Times





From left: an Indigenous elder showing her marked finger after voting in Pozo Colorado, Paraguay; a bus that brought Indigenous people to the polls; a list of Colorado Party candidates.

Chicken, Noodles and Cash: Paying for Votes in Paraguay



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARIA MAGDALENA ARRELLAGA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Voters at a school in Pozo Colorado. The Colorado Party has controlled Paraguay for 71 of the past 76 years, including four decades of military dictatorship.

By JACK NICAS

POZO COLORADO, Paraguay — The Espinillo Indigenous community is 13 miles from the nearest polling station — and no one in the village has a car.

So two weeks ago, on the eve of Paraguay's election, Miguel Paredes, a retired ambulance driver turned local politician, loaded the Indigenous families onto a bus and brought them to the side of a highway, a short walk from the polls. "We want to look after them," he said, standing watch with six young men he called colleagues.

Then, after dark, The Times found a distinctive type of vote-buying, developed over decades, on blatant display.

Mr. Paredes, 65, and his colleagues gathered some of the Indigenous people and took down their identification numbers. He told them they were to vote for the Colorado Party — the dominant, right-wing political force in Paraguay — and to make sure their fellow community members did so, too. The young men then walked the Indigenous people through a simulation of Paraguay's voting machines on a phone, guiding them to vote for Colorado candidates.

With New York Times journalists within earshot, Milner Ruffinelli, one of the young men, slipped into the Indigenous language, Guaraní. "That money that was promised to you, that's all there, too, and Mr. Miguel Paredes is going to see how to get it to you," he said. "We can't give you anything here. You know why."

Democracy is being tested across the planet. In some countries, leaders have attacked democratic institutions, including in the United States, Turkey, Brazil and Mexico, while in other places they have upended the democratic process altogether, as in Russia, Venezuela and Nicaragua.

At the same time, internet disinformation has fed swirling claims of hacked voting machines, dead voters and stolen ballots, undercutting faith in clean elections.

But in many countries, a less visible, but just as pervasive threat continues to afflict free and fair elections: buying votes.

'It's like we're animals to be bought,' said a member of one Indigenous group.

Political parties in Mexico have handed out gift cards, groceries and even washing machines. Election observers said last year's vote in the Philippines was plagued by "blatant vote buying." In February, a politician in Nigeria was caught with $500,000 and a list of possible recipients the day before national elections.

Last month in Paraguay, a country of 7.4 million in the center of South America, The Times witnessed a different, but well-established practice: Political operatives rounded up Indigenous people in Paraguay's remote north and tried to control or purchase their votes.

On the weekend of national elections, The Times witnessed representatives of the ruling Colorado Party attempting to purchase the votes of Indigenous people, and more than a dozen Indigenous people said in interviews that they had accepted money from the party just before voting.

In one case, a Colorado candidate for governor personally handed out 200,000 guaraníes, or nearly $30 each, to more than 100 Indigenous voters outside a polling station in the riverside town of Fuerte Olimpo, according to interviews with five Indigenous people who took the money. That amount is equivalent to several weeks' earnings for Paraguay's poorest.

Nestor Rodríguez, chief of the Tomáraho Indigenous community that was given the money, said it was standard. "It's just to buy clothes and things for your family," he said. He voted for that Colorado candidate, Arturo Méndez, because of promises of jobs and a new road, he said.

Mr. Méndez handily won the election. In an interview, he admitted to giving the Indigenous people cash but said it was only because they needed food and clothes, and the government had forgotten them. "Yes, we help them. But not to induce their vote," he said. "It would be heartless not to."

Paying people to vote a certain way is illegal in Paraguay. Many payments are framed as financial assistance, such as money for lunch on Election Day.



Colorado Party staff with goods for the Indigenous. "Yes, we help them," a candidate said. "But not to induce their vote."

In the bordering province of Concepción, where there are 3,000 Indigenous residents, the Colorado candidate won the governorship by just 28 votes. The losing candidate is challenging the results, claiming irregularities in the vote count.

Vote buying can swing local elections, but rarely national ones, said Ryan Carlin, a Georgia State University professor who has studied the issue. Yet it always undermines democracy by "short circuiting the mechanisms of representation and accountability," he said. "If a vote is taken for granted and given in exchange for something else, there's no policy promise on the other end."

Many of Paraguay's roughly 120,000 Indigenous people started integrating into modern society just a few decades ago, and many political parties — not just the Colorado — have since sought to control their votes.

In the days leading up to national elections, party workers fan out across the Chaco, a vast, arid region that encompasses Paraguay's northwestern half, where nearly half of the Indigenous live.

At remote communities, the workers load Indigenous people onto buses, take them to fenced-in sites and ply them with meat and beer until the vote, according to election observers, local activists and Indigenous people who have experienced it. The goal is to control a community before a rival party can.

On Election Day, party workers either pay the Indigenous people for their identification cards — thus restricting them from voting — or bus them to the polls and hand them cash.

The practice is so entrenched, it has developed its own vocabulary: "herding" the Indigenous voters and putting them in "corrals."

"It's like we're animals to be bought," said Francisco Cáceres, 68, a member of the Qom Indigenous group.

European Union election observers said they witnessed such "corrals" in Paraguay's 2013 and 2018 elections, and saw multiple cases of vote buying in the April 30 election. Parties seek to purchase the votes of many Paraguayans, not just the Indigenous, the observers said.

The practice is part of the robust political machine that has strengthened the Colorado Party's grip on Paraguay, which it has controlled for 71 of the past 76 years, including four decades of military dictatorship.

The Colorado presidential candidate, Santiago Peña, won by 460,000 votes, with 43 percent of the total. (Paraguay has fewer than 80,000 Indigenous adults, according to estimates.) Mr. Peña is the political protégé of Horacio Cartes, a former president and the current party chairman, who was sanctioned this year by the U.S. government over accusations that he had bribed his way to power.

The second- and third-place candidates have suggested that Mr. Peña's victory was rigged, but have not presented clear evidence. The third-place candidate, whose supporters have blocked highways in protest, has been jailed on accusations of attempting to obstruct elections.

In an interview before the election, Mr. Peña said that if vote buying happens, it would not swing races.

"The vote-buying argument doesn't really have much evidence," he said. "It has never been possible to demonstrate a massive purchase scheme. If 2.5 to 3 million people vote, how many votes would we have to buy?"

Still, among Paraguayans, vote buying is an open secret. "It's almost like without it, it's not an election," said the Rev. José Arias, a Catholic priest who uses his sermons to discourage his Indigenous flock from selling its votes. "People agree in theory," he said. "It's just that many who agree also accept" the bribes.

At the highway encampment, Mr. Paredes and Mr. Ruffinelli said they were not handing out bribes. The Colorado Party paid for the bus, as well as chicken, noodles and cooking oil they gave to the community, they said. But they were there because they had built relationships over time, they said, and were pushing Colorado candidates because they were the best for the community.

Everyone was free to vote how they wished, Mr. Ruffinelli said, but he expected them to vote Colorado.

"They already promised," Mr. Ruffinelli said. He rattled off statistics: The Indigenous accounted for 86 percent of the 5,822 registered voters in the local voting precinct. He said he would be analyzing the results to try to ascertain whether "this community betrayed us."



The Rev. José Arias, a Catholic priest, asked his flock not to sell their votes. "People agree in theory," he said, but they also took the bribes.

Some in the Enxet Sur community said they would accept money — but still vote against the Colorados. "If the Colorados come with an offer, we'll grab it, but we know how we're going to vote: for change," said Fermin Chilavert, 61, one of the community's elders.

Others had already taken the money and were planning to vote as asked, including 10 community members who agreed to act as "political operators" for the party on Election Day.

In a late-night meeting, Mr. Paredes and Mr. Ruffinelli explained to the operators that they were to ensure other Indigenous people voted Colorado, including by entering polling booths with them. (Election observers said political parties regularly abuse laws allowing disabled people to be accompanied to the voting booth.)

"You are going to enter with them, you are going to teach them and you are going to tell them where to click," Mr. Paredes said to the Indigenous people, many staring nervously at the ground.

The next morning, Election Day, a truck stop near the polling station was filled with buses. They had ferried hundreds of Indigenous people to vote, and each was adorned with decals of a political party, most for the Colorados.

On one bus with Colorado signs, the Indigenous passengers said they were each given 100,000 to 150,000 guaraníes, or $14 to $21, and had voted Colorado.

The man running the bus, Catalino Escobar, said the voters were given a stipend to eat. (A sandwich and a Coca-Cola at the gas station cost $2.)

"I don't know who the candidate is, to tell you the truth," said Mary Fernanda, 51, who said she accepted 100,000 guaraníes to help feed her children. "I'm only voting out of necessity."

When the votes were counted, the Colorado Party again dominated elections across Paraguay, retaining the presidency and strengthening its control of Congress.

The 19 Indigenous people who ran for national or state seats all lost. Paraguay has never elected anyone who identifies as Indigenous to national office.

ADVERTISEMENT

The U.S. Should Be a Force for Peace in the World

The Russia-Ukraine War has been an unmitigated disaster. Hundreds of thousands have been killed or wounded. Millions have been displaced. Environmental and economic destruction have been incalculable. Future devastation could be exponentially greater as nuclear powers creep ever closer toward open war.

We deplore the violence, war crimes, indiscriminate missile strikes, terrorism, and other atrocities that are part of this war. The solution to this shocking violence is not more weapons or more war, with their guarantee of further death and destruction.

As Americans and national security experts, we urge President Biden and Congress to use their full power to end the war speedily through diplomacy, especially given the grave dangers of military escalation that could spiral out of control.

Sixty years ago, President John F. Kennedy made an observation that is crucial for our survival today. "Above all, while defending our own vital interests, nuclear powers must avert those confrontations which bring an adversary to a choice of either a humiliating retreat or a nuclear war. To adopt that kind of course in the nuclear age would be evidence only of the bankruptcy of our policy--or of a collective death-wish for the world."

The immediate cause of this disastrous war in Ukraine is Russia's invasion. Yet the plans and actions to expand NATO to Russia's borders served to provoke Russian fears. And Russian leaders made this point for 30 years. A failure of diplomacy led to war. Now diplomacy is urgently needed to end the war before it destroys Ukraine and endangers humanity.

The Potential for Peace

Russia's current geopolitical anxiety is informed by memories of invasion from Charles XII, Napoleon, the Kaiser and Hitler. U.S. troops were among an Allied invasion force that intervened unsuccessfully against the winning side in Russia's post-World War I civil war. Russia sees NATO enlargement and presence on its borders as a direct threat; the U.S. and NATO see only prudent preparedness. In diplomacy, one must attempt to see with strategic empathy, seeking to understand one's adversaries. This is not weakness: it is wisdom.

We reject the idea that diplomats, seeking peace, must choose sides, in this case either Russia or Ukraine. In favoring diplomacy we choose the side of sanity. Of humanity. Of peace.

We consider President Biden's promise to back Ukraine "as long as it takes" to be a license to pursue ill-defined and ultimately unachievable goals. It could prove as catastrophic as President Putin's decision last year to launch his criminal invasion and occupation. We cannot and will not endorse the strategy of fighting Russia to the last Ukrainian.

We advocate for a meaningful and genuine commitment to diplomacy, specifically an immediate ceasefire and negotiations without any disqualifying or prohibitive preconditions. **Deliberate provocations delivered this war. In the same manner, deliberate diplomacy can end it.**

U.S. Actions and Russia's Invasion of Ukraine

As the Soviet Union collapsed and the Cold War ended, U.S. and Western European leaders assured Soviet and then Russian leaders that NATO would not expand toward Russia's borders. "There would be no extension of…NATO one inch to the east," U.S. Secretary of State James Baker told Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev on February 9, 1990. Similar assurances from other U.S. leaders as well as from British, German and French leaders throughout the 1990s confirm this.

Since 2007, Russia has repeatedly warned that NATO's armed forces on Russian borders were intolerable – just as Russian forces in Mexico or Canada would be intolerable to the U.S. now, or as Soviet missiles in Cuba were in 1962. Russia further singled out NATO expansion into Ukraine as especially provocative.

Seeing the War Through Russia's Eyes

Our attempt at understanding the Russian perspective on their war does not endorse the invasion and occupation, nor does it imply the Russians had no other option but this war.

Yet, just as Russia had other options, so too did the U.S. and NATO leading up to this moment.

The Russians made their red lines clear. In Georgia and Syria, they proved they would use force to defend those lines. In 2014, their immediate seizure of Crimea and their support of Donbas separatists demonstrated they were serious in their commitment to defending their interests. Why this was not understood

U.S./NATO Military Bases



What if the Shoe Were on the Other Foot?



by U.S. and NATO leadership is unclear; incompetence, arrogance, cynicism, or a treacherous mixture of all three are likely contributing factors.

Again, even as the Cold War ended, U.S. diplomats, generals and politicians were warning of the dangers of expanding NATO to Russia's borders and of maliciously interfering in Russia's sphere of influence. Former Cabinet officials Robert Gates and William Perry issued these warnings, as did venerated diplomats George Kennan, Jack Matlock and Henry Kissinger. In 1997, fifty senior U.S. foreign policy experts wrote an open letter to President Bill Clinton advising him not to expand NATO, calling it "a policy error of historic proportions." President Clinton chose to ignore these warnings.

Most important to our understanding of the hubris and Machiavellian calculation in U.S. decision-making is the dismissal of the warnings issued by Williams Burns, the current director of the Central Intelligence Agency. In a cable to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in 2008, while serving as Ambassador to Russia, Burns wrote of NATO expansion and Ukrainian membership:

"Ukraine and Georgia's NATO aspirations not only touch a raw nerve in Russia, they engender serious concerns about the consequences for stability in the region. Not only does Russia perceive encirclement, and efforts to undermine Russia's influence in the region, but it also fears unpredictable and uncontrolled consequences which would seriously affect Russian security interests. Experts tell us that Russia is particularly worried that the strong divisions in Ukraine over NATO membership, with much of the ethnic-Russian community against membership, could lead to a major split, involving violence or at worst, civil war. In that eventuality, Russia would have to decide whether to intervene; a decision Russia does not want to have to face."

Why did the U.S. persist in expanding NATO despite such warnings? Profit from weapons sales was a major factor. Facing opposition to NATO expansion, a group of neoconservatives and top executives of U.S. weapons manufacturers formed the U.S. Committee to Expand NATO. Between 1996 and 1998, the largest arms manufacturers spent $51 million ($94 million today) on lobbying and millions more on campaign contributions. With this largesse, NATO expansion quickly became a done deal, after which U.S. weapons manufacturers sold billions of dollars of weapons to the new NATO members.

So far, the U.S. has sent $30 billion worth of military gear and weapons to Ukraine, with total aid to Ukraine exceeding $100 billion. War, it's been said, is a racket, one that is highly profitable for a select few.

Timeline

1990
U.S. assures Russia that NATO will not expand towards it's border "…there would be no extension of…NATO one inch to the east," says U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

1996
U.S. weapons manufacturers form the Committee to Expand NATO, spending over $51 million on lobbying expenditures.

1999
NATO admits Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic to NATO. U.S. and NATO bomb Russia's ally, Serbia.

2001
U.S. unilaterally withdraws from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

2004
Seven more Eastern European nations join NATO. NATO troops are now directly on Russia's border.

2004
Russia's parliament passes a resolution denouncing NATO's expansion. Putin responds by saying that Russia would "build our defense and security policy correspondingly."

2008
NATO leaders announce plans to bring Ukraine and Georgia, also on Russia's borders, into NATO.

2009
U.S. announces plans to put missile systems into Poland and Romania.

2014
Legally elected Ukrainian president, Viktor Yanukovych, flees violence to Moscow.

2016
U.S. begins troop buildup in Europe.

2019
U.S. unilaterally withdraws from Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty.

2020
U.S. unilaterally withdraws from Open Skies Treaty.

2021
Russia submits negotiation proposals while sending more forces to the border with Ukraine. U.S. and NATO officials reject the Russian proposals immediately.

Feb 24, 2022
Russia invades Ukraine.

NATO expansion, in sum, is a key feature of a militarized U.S. foreign policy characterized by unilateralism featuring regime change and preemptive wars. Failed wars, most recently in Iraq and Afghanistan, have produced slaughter and further confrontation, a harsh reality of America's own making. The present war in Ukraine has opened a new arena of confrontation and slaughter. This reality is not entirely of our own making, yet it may well be our undoing, unless we dedicate ourselves to forging a diplomatic settlement that stops the killing and defuses tensions.

Let's make America a force for peace in the world.

Read more at
www.EisenhowerMediaNetwork.org

Signers

Dennis Fritz, Director, Eisenhower Media Network; Command Chief Master Sergeant, U.S. Air Force (retired)
Matthew Hoh, Associate Director, Eisenhower Media Network; Former Marine Corps officer, and State and Defense official
William J. Astore, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force (retired)
Karen Kwiatkowski, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force (retired)
Dennis Laich, Major General, U.S. Army (retired)
Jack Matlock, U.S. Ambassador to the U.S.S.R., 1987-91; author of *Reagan and Gorbachev: How the Cold War Ended*
Todd E. Pierce, Major, Judge Advocate, U.S. Army (retired)
Coleen Rowley, Special Agent, FBI (retired)
Jeffrey Sachs, University Professor at Columbia University
Christian Sorensen, Former Arabic linguist, U.S. Air Force
Chuck Spinney, Retired Engineer/Analyst, Office of Secretary of Defense
Winslow Wheeler, National security adviser to four Republican and Democratic U.S. Senators; Assistant Director for GAO; Director of Center for Defense Information
Lawrence B. Wilkerson, Colonel, U.S. Army (retired)
Ann Wright, Colonel, U.S. Army (retired) and former U.S. diplomat

This ad reflects the views of the signers. Paid for by Eisenhower Media Network, a project of People Power Initiatives.

Thai Election Winner Organizes Coalition, Challenging the Junta

By SUI-LEE WEE and MUKTITA SUHARTONO

BANGKOK — The two opposition parties that won the largest share of the vote in Thailand's general election over the weekend said on Monday that they had agreed to form a coalition government. It remained unclear, however, whether the ruling junta would hand over power easily.

The results of the election were a stinging rebuke to the country's military leaders, who have governed Thailand since seizing power in a coup in 2014. Although Thailand is a nation where coups are not uncommon, it had never been under military rule for so long.

Many voters, disillusioned with the never-ending cycle of putsches and protests, used the election on Sunday to demonstrate overwhelmingly that they wanted change.

The Senate, chosen by the military, may still block him from power.

"People have been through enough of a lost decade," Pita Limjaroenrat, the leader of the progressive Move Forward Party, told reporters on Monday. "Today is a new day."

The Move Forward Party — which has called for an overhaul of the military and amending a strict law that criminalizes criticism of the Thai monarchy — secured 151 seats out of the 500-member House of Representatives. The result defied opinion polls, which had predicted a strong victory for Pheu Thai, the country's largest opposition party, founded by former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Pheu Thai won 141 seats, which, like Move Forward, was short of a clear majority. The two parties announced during separate news conferences on Monday that they had agreed to work together to form a government.

Mr. Pita has led the effort to build the coalition. He said that five parties, including Pheu Thai, had already joined him, raising the opposition's control over Parliament to 309 out of 500 seats. "It's safe to assume that we have secured a majority in forming a government," Mr. Pita said on Monday.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, the general who seized power in the 2014 coup, said on Sunday that he "has respect for the democratic process and the election results." His party, United Thai Nation, won only 36 seats.

Mr. Pita's quick work in assembling a coalition lowered some uncertainty around what many Thais have described as the most consequential election of their lifetimes. But it was still unclear if he would be allowed to lead the country as prime minister.

The military-appointed Senate, which has the power to select the prime minister through a joint vote in parliament, may still block Mr. Pita from the position.

Many analysts questioned whether the Senate would tolerate any election results that threaten the status quo. Move Forward has targeted institutions and policies once considered sacrosanct in Thai society, including abolishing mandatory military conscription and reducing the punishments for the law that protects the monarchy from criticism.

With Pheu Thai in government, it could effectively place the party's founder and one of the military's top rivals, Mr. Thaksin, back at the center of the country's politics. The king must also endorse the appointment of prime minister.

At a news conference, Mr. Pita said he was not concerned about opposition from the Senate. "With the consensus that came out of the election, it would be quite a hefty price to pay for someone who's thinking of abolishing the election results or forming a minority government," he said. "And I don't think the people of Thailand would allow that to happen."

But if history is any indicator, the military, which has dominated Thai politics for decades, is unlikely to relinquish power quickly. In addition to engineering a dozen coups within a century, Thai generals rewrote the Constitution in 2017 to stack the Senate with allies and ensure that the military would have the power to determine the country's prime minister.

Gregory Raymond, a lecturer researching Southeast Asian politics at the Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, said there was still a possibility that the two military proxy parties — United Thai Nation and Palang Pracharath — could cobble together enough seats to mount their own claim to government. "That is still, in my mind, the last scenario. It would be highly undemocratic but can't be ruled out at this point," Mr. Raymond said.

Analysts warned that the Senate choosing to block Mr. Pita's appointment would likely galvanize protests in Thailand, plunging the country into more political turmoil.

"I think the reaction will be much more dangerous than four years ago," said Purawich Watanasukh, a research fellow at King Prajadhipok's Institute in Thailand, referring to the nation's previous election. "Right now, many people have Pita as their new prime minister in their minds. If Pita cannot be prime minister and Move Forward cannot form the government, it will break the people's hearts. And it will be very, very bad."

In 2020, the country's Constitutional Court disbanded the Future Forward Party, the previous iteration of the Move Forward Party, after the election. Tens of thousand of Thais took to the streets of Bangkok to protest the decision.

What started out as a protest for democratic reforms quickly grew into a pro-democracy movement calling for checks on the Thai monarchy, a subject that was once considered taboo.

The country's conservatives are likely to step up their campaigns to block the rise of Move Forward in the coming days.

Move Forward will need to manage many competing interests to keep the coalition intact. It was the only large party that pushed to amend a law criminalizing criticism of the monarchy, arguing that the law had been weaponized by royalists to persecute protesters who participated in pro-democracy demonstrations.

On Sunday night, Mr. Pita said he was still going to press ahead with amending the royal protection law.

Paetongtarn Shinawatra, the youngest daughter of Mr. Thaksin and a Pheu Thai candidate for prime minister, said on Monday that she was "ready to discuss" the issue of young people being charged with violating the law, known as Article 112. But she added that her party would not vote to get rid of the law altogether.

"We will have to tell Move Forward Party that we do not support the abolishment of Article 112," she said.

Pirada Anuwech contributed reporting.



SIRACHAI ARUNRUGSTICHAI/GETTY IMAGES



LAUREN DECICCA/GETTY IMAGES

"Today is a new day," said Pita Limjaroenrat, left, head of the progressive Move Forward Party. He plans to form a government with the Pheu Thai party, led by Paetongtarn Shinawatra, below in white.

NEWS ANALYSIS

As Turks Go to Polls, Erdogan's Grip on Power Loosens, but It Holds

From Page A1

coverage, with little attention paid to corruption allegations or government mistakes. The government has forced some news organizations critical of it to shut down, fined others for their coverage, and prosecuted some journalists. The group Reporters Without Borders ranks Turkey 165th in press freedom out of 180 countries it grades.

The opposition did not officially acknowledge Mr. Erdogan's lead or contest the figures, but said they would work to win the runoff.

"We will stand up and take this election together," Mr. Kilicdaroglu wrote on Twitter on Monday. "At the end of everything, it will only be what our nation says."

In his 20 years as Turkey's dominant political leader, first as prime minister, then as president, Mr. Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party have regularly trounced their opponents at the ballot box. The last time, Mr. Erdogan stood for election in 2018, he won 52 percent of the vote in the first round, beating the closest of his three challengers by 22 percentage points. He fared worse this time, prompting the first presidential runoff in Turkish history.

Voter turnout across the country on Sunday was nearly 89 percent, underlining the great faith Turks put in elections.

Mr. Erdogan faced considerable headwinds going into the vote.

Turkey has been struggling since 2018 with a sinking currency and painful inflation that exceeded 80 percent annually last year and stood at 44 percent in April.

His opponents pulled together in an unprecedented coalition of six parties that backed Mr. Kilicdaroglu. Throughout the campaign, the opposition courted voters by promising to fix the economy, restore civil liberties and build a more inclusive society, a stark contrast to Mr. Erdogan's often polarizing rhetoric.

But that wasn't enough.

Analysts described the results as just the latest example of Mr. Erdogan's formidable survival skills.

Mr. Kulat said that the Feb. 6 earthquakes had actually helped Mr. Erdogan in unexpected ways. The vast destruction not only left huge numbers of people homeless but put pressure on communities outside of the afflicted area by driving up rent prices. That increased the attraction of Mr. Erdogan's campaign promises to build new homes across the quake zone in one year.

"The citizens said, 'If anyone can build me a house, it is Erdogan,'" Mr. Kulat said.

But Mr. Erdogan also used his power to tilt the competition in his favor. And as the incumbent in a system with few checks on presidential power, Mr. Erdogan effectively used the state as his campaign apparatus, doling out new benefits to voters from the national purse.

Mr. Erdogan campaigned by dismissing his opponents as incompetent, supported by a Western conspiracy and in cahoots with terrorists. He sought opportunities to link himself in voters' minds with images of growing Turkish might and independence, parking a warship in central Istanbul for families to visit and becoming the first owner of a Turkish-built electric car.

And he and his ministers sold him as the defender of religious Turks, stoking their fears by telling them that the opposition sought to take away their newfound freedoms and expand gay rights. While a predominately Muslim society, Turkey was founded as a staunchly secular state that kept most outward signs of religion out of public life. Mr. Erdogan loosened some of those rules, including a ban on women in state jobs wearing head scarves.

Those issues appeared to have kept enough voters on board to give Mr. Erdogan the lead.

"Political identification is very 'sticky,' and doesn't easily come undone because of new information or experience," Howard Eissenstat, an associate professor of history at St. Lawrence University, wrote in an email. "Erdogan's emphasis on nationalism, terrorism and nefarious Western plots isn't window dressing for many voters: it is at the core of their worldview."

In contrast to what Mr. Erdogan could deliver to voters, the opposition could only offer promises.

To build his support, Mr. Kilicdaroglu pulled together six parties that include right-wing nationalists, staunch secularists and Islamists, a feat in itself. But many voters questioned how such a broad coalition would stick together, much less run the country.

"Despite frustration with the economy and the earthquakes' effects, a lot of people didn't think an opposition coalition — particularly one with internal ideological divides and personal power struggles — would be able to govern effectively," said Lisel Hintz, an assistant professor of international relations at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.

That Mr. Kilicdaroglu hails from a religious minority probably also turned some voters away, Ms. Hintz said. He is an Alevi, a member of a heterodox Muslim sect that is looked down upon by some members of Turkey's Sunni Muslim majority.

"It is likely the case that some Sunnis did not want to vote for an Alevi," Ms. Hintz said.

While no voters interviewed in recent weeks openly expressed such sentiments, many voiced concerns about a different minority group, criticizing the opposition for working with Turkey's main pro-Kurdish party, equating that to allying with terrorists.

Turkey has fought a long and deadly battle against Kurdish militants that Turkey, the United States and the European Union consider terrorists. The Turkish government often accuses Kurdish politicians of cooperating with the militants, and many of them have been jailed, prosecuted or removed from office because of such allegations.

Mr. Erdogan has played on fears of such links, and many voters see the opposition as sympathetic to militancy.

"I am worried that the other side will win and that would be bad for the country," Melike Kurt, a recent university graduate, said after voting for Mr. Erdogan on Sunday. She specifically mentioned concern that people jailed on terrorism-related charges would be released.

As a woman who wore a head scarf, she also praised Mr. Erdogan for standing up for women like her to dress as they wished, and worried that an opposition government would rescind those rights in the name of state secularism.

"I can't imagine what kind of situation we'd be in if we lose," said Ms. Kurt, 24. "I believe that our freedoms would be limited if they win, in terms of head scarves and other issues."

Safak Timur contributed reporting from Ankara, and Gulsin Harman from Istanbul.



SERGEY PONOMAREV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Counting ballots. As of Monday, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan had 49.5 percent of vote. Kemal Kilicdaroglu had 44.9 percent.



BURAK KARA/GETTY IMAGES

Mr. Erdogan on Monday in Ankara, Turkey. His candidacy was hobbled by inflation and his government's earthquake response.



BURAK KARA/GETTY IMAGES

Mr. Kilicdaroglu, center, arriving at a news conference. "We will stand up and take this election together," he wrote on Twitter.



TOM JAMIESON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



NETFLIX, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jane D. Hartley, left, the U.S. ambassador to Britain, has a background as a television executive. Right, Keri Russell plays a U.S. ambassador and Rufus Sewell plays her husband in "The Diplomat."

At the Real Embassy, an American Ambassador's Life Is No Spy Thriller

By MARK LANDLER

This article includes spoilers for the Netflix series "The Diplomat."

LONDON — On a tranquil Friday morning, Jane D. Hartley was sitting in the garden room at Winfield House, the baronial residence of the American ambassador to London, listing the many ways her life is different from that of Kate Wyler, the fictional ambassador played by Keri Russell in the popular Netflix drama "The Diplomat."

"The concept that you could fly from one country to another without ever raising your hand on Capitol Hill," Ms. Hartley said, noting that Ambassador Wyler never had to undergo Senate confirmation. "Sorry, that doesn't happen."

"I also don't have a D.C.M. who brings racks of clothes into my office and tells me what I should wear," she said, referring to the deputy chief of mission, who in the series acts as the ambassador's fashion stylist. "I wear my own clothes."

A gauzy mix of spy thriller and soap opera, "The Diplomat" debuted last month as the most-watched series on Netflix, and remains in the top 10. It has become compulsive viewing in foreign-policy circles — easy to mock for its Bond-meets-Bourne plot twists but also a source of gratification among diplomats, who feel Hollywood is finally showing them the recognition it has long given C.I.A. agents (though the series has one of those, too).

"It's about damn time that we're the heroes," said Matthew Palmer, the real-life deputy chief of mission in London.

Suddenly, Ms. Hartley finds her job the object of fascination, even at the highest levels of the State Department and White House. She said Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Jake Sullivan, the national security adviser, had both quizzed her about the fine points of the eight-part series, having watched it.

As Ms. Hartley's meeting with a reporter was winding down, her husband, Ralph Schlosstein, passed quietly through the front hall, on his way upstairs. A Wall Street investor, he divides his time between New York and London.

A Netflix show set in London is watched by actual diplomats.

But he neither sits in on Ms. Hartley's meetings with British officials nor wrestles with her in the garden outside Winfield House during a visit by the American president — as did Ambassador Wyler and her husband, Hal, a jealous, high-octane fellow diplomat played by the British actor Rufus Sewell.

"I think my security might do something if that were to happen," said Ms. Hartley, 73, a good-humored, well-connected Democratic Party fund-raiser. She is on her second plum assignment, having served as ambassador to France from 2014 to 2017 (John Adams is the only other U.S. ambassador posted to both Paris and London).

With a background as a television executive, Ms. Hartley is sympathetic to the creative license that Hollywood often takes. On Tuesday, she was scheduled to welcome Ms. Russell, who memorably played a Russian sleeper spy in "The Americans," and the show's creator, Debora Cahn, whose credits include "Homeland" and "The West Wing," to Winfield House to talk about how "The Diplomat" stands up against real diplomacy.

"Diplomats in pop culture are typically bit players," Mr. Palmer explained. "In the movie, we might be the ones who come in during the meeting and say, 'But what about the risks to the long-term relationship?'"

Mr. Palmer's fictional counterpart, Stuart Hayford (played by Ato Essandoh) doesn't just help dress the ambassador. He is her constant companion, advising her on the president's plans to recruit her as vice president and helping hatch harebrained schemes, like when she sneaks into the British foreign secretary's office to meet an Iranian envoy, who promptly falls dead. The Hayford character is also dating the C.I.A. station chief.

In real life, Mr. Palmer does none of those things. Instead, he manages the embassy, one of the largest American diplomatic facilities in the world, with 1,100 employees. But in his spare time, Mr. Palmer has written four diplomatic thrillers, which gives him an appreciation of both the accurate details and the faux pas.

The portraits of Winston Churchill and Dwight D. Eisenhower in Kate Wyler's office are copies of those in Ms. Hartley's. Aaron Snipe, the embassy's spokesman, who posted a gentle fact-check of the series on Twitter, noted that although the producers rented a stately mansion outside London as a stand-in for Winfield House, they used digital technology to add the BT Tower, which is visible from its rear windows.

The far-fetched parts start with the show's premise, and its emphasis on a sensitive national security role for the ambassador.

Kate Wyler, a career diplomat with a history of derring-do assignments, is diverted to London from Kabul, Afghanistan, after a deadly attack on a British aircraft carrier. She fears she will have to throw garden parties, but instead finds herself at the beating heart of American and British foreign policy during a Tom Clancy-grade geopolitical crisis.

None of this, diplomats say, resembles the actual job of a political ambassador, particularly to a close ally like Britain, when each side's top national security officials have the others' cellphone numbers on speed dial.

"The reality is that Jake Sullivan will pick up the phone and call his counterpart, and the ambassador will hear about it afterward," said Lewis A. Lukens, who served as deputy chief of mission under Ms. Hartley's predecessor, Robert Wood Johnson IV.

That doesn't mean Britain's foreign secretary, James Cleverly, hasn't cultivated friendly ties with Ms. Hartley. He chatted with her, while sipping a whiskey, at the ambassador's Christmas party at Winfield House. The Foreign Office gave the producers of "The Diplomat" rare access to film inside its grand headquarters on Whitehall. Mr. Cleverly is even planning to tape a video for Netflix to promote the series.

"The show gets the informality of really good meetings in the foreign secretary's office, minus the people dropping dead," said Matthew Barzun, who served as ambassador during the Obama administration.

The key to keeping one's sanity, Mr. Barzun said, is not to worry about being in every critical meeting. During his posting, he visited British high schools, where he engaged with students about what they admired, and distrusted, about the United States. With her business ties, Ms. Hartley said she planned to focus on apprenticeship and training programs for young Britons — reviving a project she began in Paris.

The last ambassador whose career even remotely parallels Ms. Russell's character is Raymond G.H. Seitz, sent to London by President George H.W. Bush in 1991. A career diplomat who had served there twice before, Mr. Seitz heard about his new post when he was called out of a bar in Brussels after attending a NATO meeting. On the phone was the president.

"When I came in, I knew half the cabinet," said Mr. Seitz, now 82, from his home in New Hampshire. "Coming from Washington, I also knew what the thinking was on Europe. Plus, I was charming. Let's not overlook that."

So winning was Mr. Seitz that President Bill Clinton decided to keep him on after entering the White House. That meant Mr. Seitz dealt with the fallout from Mr. Clinton's decision to issue a visa to Gerry Adams, the leader of Sinn Fein, a political party with ties to the underground Irish Republican Army. Prime Minister John Major, a friend of Mr. Seitz's, was so infuriated that he refused to speak to Mr. Clinton.

Ms. Hartley has gotten a taste of the tensions generated by Northern Ireland. President Biden recently made a brief visit to Belfast, followed by a more leisurely tour of the Republic of Ireland, where he celebrated his Irish roots — a disparity that drew tetchy coverage in Britain's right-leaning newspapers.

Last week, Mr. Biden ruffled more feathers when he said at a Democratic fund-raiser in New York City that he had gone to Belfast to make sure "the Brits didn't screw around" with the post-Brexit trade status of Northern Ireland.

It wasn't a lethal attack on a British warship, as in "The Diplomat," but for Ms. Hartley, it was a distraction in a "special relationship" that she says is closely aligned on Northern Ireland, as well as the war in Ukraine and other issues.

"I've known him for a long time," she said of the president. "His roots are in Ireland." Then she added diplomatically, "Biden has English roots as well."



TOM JAMIESON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Winfield House, the U.S. ambassador's London residence. The TV show uses another mansion, with details added digitally.

W.H.O. Warns Against Artificial Sweeteners

By APRIL RUBIN

The World Health Organization on Monday warned against using artificial sweeteners to control body weight or reduce the risk of noncommunicable diseases, saying that long-term use is not effective and could pose health risks.

These alternatives to sugar, when consumed long term, do not serve to reduce body fat in either adults or children, the W.H.O. said in a recommendation, adding that continued consumption could increase the risk of Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and mortality in adults.

"The recommendation applies to all people except individuals with pre-existing diabetes and includes all synthetic and naturally occurring or modified nonnutritive sweeteners that are not classified as sugars found in manufactured foods and beverages, or sold on their own to be added to foods and beverages by consumers," the W.H.O. said.

The W.H.O. recommendation is based on a review of available evidence, the agency said, and is part of a set of guidelines for healthy diets being rolled out.

Some examples of the sweeteners include aspartame, saccharin, sucralose and stevia. The W.H.O.'s announcement contradicts previous studies that have said these sweeteners don't offer any health benefits but also do not cause harm.

Nutrition research is constantly evolving and findings are being updated with stronger data, said Stephanie McBurnett, a registered dietitian and nutrition educator with the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. Examining the effects of saturated fats and other parts of people's diets may provide more insight into the overall reasons behind some health issues that have been blamed on sugar.

"It's not surprising to me that the World Health Organization didn't find really any difference in health benefits between a regular soda and a diet soda," said Ms. Burnett, who is also a licensed dietitian and nutritionist. "They're both processed foods." She added, "If you look at what's driving these chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes, obesity, sugar is not always the only factor."

The recommendation from the W.H.O. does not directly affect any individual country's policy. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration, for example, might take this guidance into account and institute its own concerns or tweak labeling, Ms. McBurnett said. But it is not under any obligation to do so, either.

The F.D.A. did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The International Sweeteners Association, a nonprofit organization that represents the industry, called the W.H.O.'s recommendation a disservice to consumers.

"Low/no calorie sweeteners are one of the most thoroughly researched ingredients in the world and continue to be a helpful tool to manage obesity, diabetes and dental diseases," the association said in a statement. "They offer consumers an alternative to reduce sugar and calorie intake with the sweet taste they know and expect."

The W.H.O.'s recommendation is currently considered conditional, the organization said.

"This signals that policy decisions based on this recommendation may require substantive discussion in specific country contexts, linked for example to the extent of consumption in different age groups," the statement said.

The recommendation doesn't extend as far as personal care and hygiene products that include artificial sugars such as toothpaste, skin creams and medications, the W.H.O. said. It also doesn't include low-calorie sugars and sugar alcohols, which come from sugar itself.



ORDER TODAY!
To receive this special price and free shipping use offer code: EXALT4
1.800.556.7376 or visit ross-simons.com/exalt
Item #951861

In a First, the U.N. Commemorates the Displacement of Palestinians

By FARNAZ FASSIHI and HIBA YAZBEK



ED JONES/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Mahmoud Abbas, the president of the Palestinian Authority, speaking at the event at the United Nations headquarters on Monday.

The latest arena in a decades-long narrative battle.

NEW YORK — The United Nations for the first time on Monday officially commemorated the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in the war surrounding the creation of Israel 75 years ago, drawing a sharp response from the Israeli ambassador to the world body.

The event — marking the Nakba, or "catastrophe," by Palestinians — was attended by the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas; many member states from Asia, Africa, Central and South America and the Middle East; and representatives of the African Union and the Arab League, who delivered speeches. The United States and Britain did not attend.

"This resolution represents a recognition by your organizations of the ongoing historic injustice that fell on the Palestinian people in 1948 and before that date, and that continues after," Mr. Abbas said. He added that it was also a rebuttal "for the first time by you of the Israeli Zionist narrative that denies this Nakba."

The event was the latest arena for a decades-long narrative battle between Israelis and Palestinians. To Israelis, the creation of their state was a heroic moment for a long-persecuted people that deserves celebration. But to Palestinians, it was a moment of profound national trauma.

The United Nations General Assembly, composed of 193 member states, has often been sympathetic to Palestinians. Its commemoration on Monday came at a tense period in Israel, Gaza and the occupied West Bank, where violence has surged this year. While Palestinians celebrated the U.N. action as validation, the Israelis saw it as an attack on their state.

Mr. Abbas called for the suspension of Israel's membership from the United Nations, saying that the Jewish state never "fulfilled nor respected its obligations and commitments" as a prerequisite to its membership, and had violated resolutions.

Mr. Abbas received a standing ovation and two rounds of long applause after his speech, which lasted over an hour. Chants of "free Palestine" and "end the occupation now" were shouted from the audience.

Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Gilad Erdan, condemned the event as "shameful" and called for countries to boycott it in a letter he sent to diplomats on Sunday.

"Attending this despicable event means destroying any chance of peace by adopting the Palestinian narrative calling the establishment of the state of Israel a disaster," Mr. Erdan said in a video statement.

The event was organized by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, a body made up of 25 member states that was created in 1975 by a General Assembly mandate to promote the rights of Palestinians and support peace. Members include India, Turkey, South Africa, Venezuela and Malta.

Member states of the U.N. General Assembly voted in November to approve a resolution calling for the commemoration. It will continue on Monday evening with another event at the General Assembly hall with an "immersive experience" of the Nakba with live music, photographs, videos and testimonials.

"The Nakba and the suffering of generations of Palestinians is a story rarely taught in history books, too often eluded and forgotten," said the chairman of the committee, Cheikh Niang, Senegal's ambassador to the United Nations. "Today the resilience of Palestinians through history, but particularly since 1948, must be recognized."

Around 700,000 Palestinians were expelled or fled their homes in 1947 and 1948 during the wars surrounding Israel's establishment as a state. Most live as refugees in camps in neighboring nations, and their right to return home is a major issue in any two-state solution. Many of the villages they left behind were taken over by Israelis or destroyed.

The events are the subject of a long-running dispute. Palestinians see them as an act of ethnic cleansing instigated by Israeli militias, which killed hundreds of Palestinians in addition to driving thousands from their homes.

But to Israelis, the conflict was a war of survival against invading Arab armies and hostile local militants who committed atrocities and who rejected a U.N. plan to divide the land between Jews and Arabs.

For many Israelis, the Palestinian exodus was largely voluntary, encouraged by Arab leaders, and was accompanied by the persecution and expulsion of Jews from their homes in Palestine and elsewhere in the Middle East.

Violence in Gaza and the occupied West Bank has risen recently. On Saturday, Israel and the militant group Palestinian Islamic Jihad agreed to a cease-fire that ended five days of fighting that left 35 people dead.

The two-hour commemoration in a packed General Assembly hall began with a video by Shireen Abu Akleh, the Palestinian-American journalist from Al-Jazeera who was fatally shot by an Israeli soldier last May. The report showed scenes of Israeli violence against Palestinians. The New York Arabic Orchestra, directed by the four-time Grammy Award-winning musician Eugene Friesen, performed. And the master of ceremonies, Maher Nasser, a senior U.N. official and Palestinian refugee, said the goal of the event was to convey "a history of endurance, remembrance and holding on to beautiful traditions."

The event did not appear to prompt a widespread reaction from Palestinians in Gaza, Israel, and the West Bank, but some Palestinian rights groups noted the significance of the U.N. commemoration.

The International Commission to Support Palestinians' Rights, a rights group based in Gaza, called it "a unique and unprecedented step" and said that it should be "translated into enabling the Palestinian people to exercise their right to independence and return."

Hani Akkad, a Palestinian political analyst, wrote in al-Quds newspaper that the event confirms "the justice of the Palestinian cause and the legality of the Palestinian national struggle," and is a reminder that the world has not forgotten the Nakba "no matter how much the occupying state tried to portray itself as a victim."

Separately from the U.N. event, thousands of Palestinians across Gaza, Israel and the West Bank held rallies and protests to commemorate the Nakba.

In Ramallah, in the West Bank, hundreds gathered outside the Yasir Arafat Mausoleum, where the former Palestinian president is buried. They waved Palestinian flags in a rally attended by Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh.

At Tel Aviv University in Israel, dozens of students stood at the campus entrance and held Palestinian flags.

Farnaz Fassihi reported from New York, and Hiba Yazbek from Jerusalem.

Mexico's Lavish Presidential Jet Now Belongs to Tajikistan

By JESUS JIMÉNEZ



LUIS CORTES/REUTERS

The luxury Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner was ordered by Felipe Calderón, a former Mexican president.

A plane that Andrés Manuel López Obrador, the president of Mexico, once described as an "insult to the people" arrived in Tajikistan on Monday, he said, completing the sale of the jet to that country's government and delivering on a campaign promise to do away with it.

Since he was elected in 2018, Mr. López Obrador, known as AMLO, has struggled to find a buyer for the Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, which was ordered by former president Felipe Calderón and used by his successor, Enrique Peña Nieto.

"I don't know why they bought such a large plane," Mr. López Obrador said in Spanish at a news conference on Monday.

Over the years, Mr. López Obrador said he had offered to sell it to former President Donald Trump, President Biden and Vice President Harris. At one point, Mr. López Obrador tried to raffle off the plane, which came with many amenities, including a treadmill.

"We couldn't sell it because of the luxury of the plane," Mr. López Obrador said.

Ultimately, the government of Tajikistan bought the jet for $92 million, or about $1.6 billion Mexican pesos. The sale was announced by the Mexican government last month. The plane then needed to be prepared for the government of Tajikistan. It's unclear how much was spent on refurbishing it.

At the news conference, Mr. López Obrador showed images of the jet's new design, which says "Tajikistan" in all capital letters along the side and has a tail painted to look like that of the Tajik flag.

The government of Tajikistan did not immediately respond to an email requesting comment about the plane on Monday.

The use of such a lavish jet is bound to draw criticism in Tajikistan. The country, which is in Central Asia and shares borders with Afghanistan, China, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, is among the poorest countries in the region and depends largely on remittances, according to the U.S. State Department.

The presidential jet, which was being stored in San Bernardino, Calif., took off from that state early Sunday morning and arrived in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, around 7:30 a.m. local time on Monday, according to information from FlightAware, a flight-tracking company.

Called an 'insult to the people,' it was sold for $92 million.

Mr. López Obrador, who flies on commercial airlines when he travels, promised during his campaign that he would sell the plane, previously calling it "an example of the excesses" of Mexico's former leaders.

Some of the money from the sale will be used to build two hospitals, one in the state of Guerrero and another in Oaxaca, Mr. López Obrador said on Monday.

"If I had used it, we would have spent a lot," Mr. López Obrador said, citing examples of additional costs needed for the plane such as Wi-Fi.

The plane was designed for long-haul flights, Mr. López Obrador said, adding that it wasn't practical for domestic flights in Mexico.

"It wasn't just the cost of using it and the maintenance," Mr. López Obrador said. "Technically, it wasn't convenient."

Natalie Kitroeff contributed reporting.

China Sentences U.S. Citizen To Life Term for Espionage

By CHANG CHE and OLIVIA WANG

A Chinese court said it sentenced a 78-year-old American citizen to life in prison on Monday on unspecified charges of spying, the latest in a wave of espionage cases the authorities have pursued amid growing wariness of foreign influence in the country.

The Intermediate People's Court in the southeastern city of Suzhou said in a short statement that it pronounced John Shing-Wan Leung guilty of espionage and sentenced him. It said that Mr. Leung was arrested in April 2021 by state security officials, but provided no details about the charges or the circumstances of his detention or trial. The court also ordered about $70,000 worth of his personal property to be seized.

Mr. Leung holds a United States passport and is a permanent resident of Hong Kong, according to the statement posted on the court's social media account.

The court in Suzhou did not respond to multiple requests for comment. A spokesman for the United States Embassy in Beijing said the embassy was aware of the reports about the case but declined to comment because of privacy concerns. American citizens arrested in China must sign a privacy waiver to allow embassies and consulates to release information about their cases to the public.

Trials in China on charges of espionage or other sensitive political issues are often shrouded in secrecy, with proceedings closed to the public and the news media. Courts are controlled by the ruling Communist Party.

China has recently stepped up actions against what it sees as a growing threat of spies through a wave of raids, inspections and arrests targeting businesses with foreign ties as well as individuals.

In March, Beijing detained a Japanese business executive from a pharmaceutical company for espionage. Last year, the authorities arrested a high-ranking editor of a Chinese Communist Party newspaper while he was having lunch with a Japanese diplomat, accusing the editor of acting as an agent for Japan or the United States, his family says.

Chinese officials have raided the offices or interrogated the staff of American consulting firms such as the Mintz Group and Bain & Company. Most recently, state media announced a crackdown on the consulting industry in the name of national security, singling out Capvision Partners, a consulting firm with offices in New York and Shanghai. In describing the crackdown, China's state broadcaster CCTV accused Western countries of stealing intelligence in key industries, including defense, finance, energy and health, as part of a "strategy of containment and suppression against China."

Last month, China approved revisions to a counterespionage law that expanded the kinds of activities that could land foreigners behind bars. Experts say that the amendments, which go into effect in July, could criminalize a range of mundane tasks related to information gathering such as the work of journalists and due diligence research on companies. Foreign businesses have already begun to reassess their operations in China and increase protections for employees.

The New York Times

Sharpen employee perspective.
Empower forward thinking.



Provide a companywide subscription to The Times.
nytimes.com/companywide

ECA FEST
IBECA FESTI
TRIBECA FESTIVA
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL
TRIBECA FESTIVAL

TRIBECA FESTIVAL

JUNE 7–18

SCAN TO SEE THE FESTIVAL LINEUP

FILM | IMMERSIVE | GAMES | TALKS | TV MUSIC | AUDIO STORYTELLING | COMEDY

AT&T indeed audible City National Bank DIAGEO OKX

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT TRIBECAFILM.COM

War in Ukraine

Zelensky's European Tour Ends in Britain With a Promise of More Arms

By MARK LANDLER

LONDON — President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine has been promised billions of dollars in new military aid during a whirlwind tour of European allies that reflects a striking shift in the political landscape, as Europe takes a more central role in arming Ukraine for its anticipated counteroffensive to drive Russia from its territory.

Mr. Zelensky's four-country tour began in Italy on Saturday and ended in Britain on Monday, when Prime Minister Rishi Sunak pledged to provide a major package of air-defense missiles and attack drones. That was in addition to Britain's recent delivery of long-range cruise missiles. And it followed Germany's pledge to give Ukraine a nearly $3 billion package of weapons, as well as less concrete promises of additional weapons from France and Italy.

Europe's show of support for Ukraine, analysts said, underscores that the war is in a pivotal phase, with Ukrainian forces massing for a counteroffensive that could set the terms for any future negotiation with Russia. It also reflects a recognition that support for Ukraine in the United States, still by far the largest supplier of weapons, is likely to come under pressure.

Mr. Zelensky is concerned that as the American presidential race heats up, President Biden will be less able to lead diplomatic efforts, German and Ukrainian officials said. Should a Republican win the White House, officials worry there will be a collapse in leadership among Western allies.

"This is a crucial moment in Ukraine's resistance to a terrible war of aggression they did not choose or provoke," Mr. Sunak said in a statement, as he welcomed Mr. Zelensky at Chequers, the British leader's country residence outside London.

Mr. Zelensky, who hugged Mr. Sunak after climbing out of a helicopter, described the meetings as "substantive negotiations" and referred to Mr. Sunak in a post on Twitter as "my friend Rishi." The two met in a room used by Winston Churchill to write his rally-the-nation radio broadcasts during World War II.

Mr. Zelensky held similarly warm meetings with Chancellor Olaf Scholz of Germany in Berlin and President Emmanuel Macron of France in Paris, both on Sunday; and with Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni of Italy in Rome, where he also met Pope Francis, on Saturday. From his visits, Mr. Zelensky emerged with at least the promise of more weapons.



CARL COURT/GETTY IMAGES

President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine visited Prime Minister Rishi Sunak at his country residence outside London on Monday.

The new long-range missiles, attack drones and tanks and other armored vehicles secured from allies in recent days will fulfill many, but not all, of the demands for weapons that Ukraine has said it needs for a counteroffensive.

"The trajectory across Europe is to do more," said Malcolm Chalmers, the deputy director general of the Royal United Services Institute, a research group in London. "That is partly about the evolution of European politics. It's also driven by the expectations that the next few months are critical, and things could go either way."

"The prospect of faltering American commitment as we approach the election is at the back of people's minds," Mr. Chalmers added. "That has led to the desire to get Ukraine to the best possible position before negotiations."

White House officials have said privately that they remain confident they have bipartisan support in Congress to continue helping Ukraine in the near term, but they have not sought additional financial aid since Republicans took over the House and, so, have not tested that assumption.

Firming up support from leaders in Berlin, Rome and Paris.

Taken together, military analysts said, the European reinforcements make it highly likely that Ukrainian troops will soon strike back at Russian forces that control the country's south, setting off what could be one of the bloodiest stretches of the 15-month war. Mr. Zelensky had warned that without more weapons, the counteroffensive could be delayed.

Germany was the first to answer his call: Its commitment included 30 additional Leopard tanks, 20 armored fighting vehicles, 16 air-defense systems, more than 200 drones and a slew of other arms and ammunition.

The Leopards and armored fighting vehicles could be useful in reclaiming territory, since the grassy steppe in Ukraine's south is suited "for tank or maneuver warfare," said Jacob Funk Kirkegaard, a former Danish army intelligence officer who is now a senior fellow at the German Marshall Fund in Brussels.

Britain's missiles and drones, he added, could be used to attack Russian bases in Crimea, the Black Sea peninsula that Moscow seized after a disputed referendum in 2014.

Russia's Defense Ministry claims that the long-range missile, known as Storm Shadow, has already been fired by forces in eastern Ukraine, injuring six civilians on Saturday. The claim could not be independently verified, and there was no comment from Britain.

The Kremlin expressed anger at Britain's pledge. "We take an extremely negative view of it," said the Kremlin spokesman, Dmitri S. Peskov, according to the Russian state news agency TASS. But he added that the weapons would "not have any significant impact" on the war.

The United States has resisted sending long-range missiles to Ukraine, in part to avoid escalating the conflict with weapons that could reach into Russian territory. That is also one reason the Biden administration has not acceded to Ukraine's requests for American-made F-16 fighter jets.

American officials have said, however, they will not block other states from sending their own weapons to Ukraine. And analysts said Britain would not have given the long-range missiles without Washington's tacit approval.

Mr. Sunak promised to start training Ukrainian fighter pilots on F-16s this summer. Mr. Macron also said in a televised interview on Monday that France and other European countries had "opened the door to training pilots" and that "training can start right away." He added that "discussions are underway with the Americans."

Europe's increased pledges, analysts said, reflect a growing confidence that Ukraine's troops could make decisive breakthroughs with its counteroffensive. Driving Russia out of Ukrainian territory would greatly increase Mr. Zelensky's leverage in any negotiation with President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia.

"We wouldn't be committing this amount of weapons to Ukraine at this point if the thinking was that it was not likely that they would succeed," Mr. Kirkegaard said. "Nothing is certain, but we in the West seem to be increasingly bullish on Ukraine."

In February, on his first visit to Western Europe after the war broke out, Mr. Zelensky visited London, where he appealed for combat aircraft before traveling to Paris for a meeting with Mr. Macron and Mr. Scholz. This time, Britain was Mr. Zelensky's final stop.

With its aggressive approach, Britain has often acted as a catalyst for more reluctant Western countries to supply Ukraine with heavier weapons. Its decision to send a squadron of Challenger 2 battle tanks, for example, foreshadowed decisions by Germany and the United States to send more sophisticated tanks.

Britain also provided about $2.8 billion in military aid to Ukraine in 2022, making it the country's largest backer after the United States and Germany.

European and Ukrainian officials said Mr. Zelensky was also privately pushing for a greater European role on the diplomatic stage. Ukraine is wary of countries with close relations to Russia, like China and Brazil, drawing up peace plans or acting as mediators.

Mr. Zelensky hopes to get allies like Germany more involved, according to a Ukrainian official who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

Mr. Macron, who has tried to position himself as a key diplomatic player in future peace talks, pressed China's top leader, Xi Jinping, last month to use his close relationship with Moscow to help start negotiations.

China later announced it would send Li Hui, its special representative for Eurasian affairs, to Ukraine after a phone call between Mr. Xi and Mr. Zelensky. Mr. Li was to begin his trip on Monday to Ukraine and Russia in an attempt to help negotiate an end to the war.

Reporting was contributed by Lara Jakes in Rome, Erika Solomon and Christopher F. Schuetze in Berlin, Peter Baker in Washington, Constant Méheut in Paris and Vivian Wang in Beijing.

U.S.-Made Technology Flows to Russia Despite Global Sanctions on the Nation

By ANA SWANSON and NIRAJ CHOKSHI

WASHINGTON — Last August, Oleg Patsulya, a Russian citizen living near Miami, emailed a Russian airline that had been cut off from Western technology and materials with a tempting offer.

He could help circumvent the global sanctions imposed on Rossiya Airlines after Russia's invasion of Ukraine by shuffling the aircraft parts and electronics that it so desperately needed through a network of companies based in Florida, Turkey and Russia.

"In light of the sanctions imposed against the Russian Federation, we have been successfully solving challenges at hand," Mr. Patsulya wrote, according to a criminal complaint filed Friday with the U.S. District Court in Arizona.

Mr. Patsulya and his business partner were arrested Thursday on charges of violating U.S. export controls and international money laundering in a case that illustrates the global networks that are trying to help Russia bypass the most expansive technological controls in history.

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the United States has acted in partnership with nearly 40 other governments to impose sanctions on Russia, including limits on Moscow's access to weapons, computer chips, aircraft parts and other products needed to fuel its economy and its war. The sanctions also applied to Russian airlines including Aeroflot, its subsidiary Rossiya and others.

But despite these far-reaching sanctions, thousands of shipments of aircraft parts were successfully sent into Russia last year, according to a trove of Russian customs data obtained by The New York Times.

The data, which was compiled and analyzed by Import Genius, a U.S.-based trade data aggregator, shows that tens of millions of dollars of aircraft parts were sent to Russian airlines explicitly facing sanctions by the Biden administration, including to Rossiya Airlines, Aeroflot, Ural Airlines, S7 Airlines, Utair Aviation and Pobeda Airlines.

Those shipments were made possible by illicit networks like Mr. Patsulya's, which have sprung up to try to bypass the restrictions by shuffling goods through a series of straw buyers, often in the Middle East and Asia.

For instance, dozens of shipments of copper wires, bolts, graphite and other parts marked as made in the United States by Boeing slipped into the warehouses of Aeroflot last year. They traversed obscure trading companies, free-trade zones and industrial parks in the United Arab Emirates and China, and then traveled into Russia, to help patch up Aeroflot's dilapidated fleet.

The data captures more than 5,000 individual shipments of aircraft parts into Russia over a period of eight months in 2022, from simple screws to a Honeywell-branded aircraft engine starter valued at $290,000.

Thousands of shipments of aircraft parts sent last year.

In all, it shows that $14.4 million of U.S.-made aircraft parts were sent into Russia during the eight months, including $8.9 million of parts that are described as being manufactured or trademarked by the U.S. plane maker Boeing and sold into Russia via third parties.

Boeing said it had fully complied with U.S. sanctions and had suspended providing parts, maintenance and technical support for customers in Russia in early 2022. Experts in the aviation supply chain said the parts probably came from a variety of sources, such as existing overseas stocks from airlines and repair facilities or resellers who trade in scrapped parts.

Most of the products were routed through countries like the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, China and the Maldives, according to the data. But a handful of shipments — including to Rossiya — were sent directly from the United States or Europe.

The shipments also increased over the course of last year as Russia recruited global businesses to help it bypass the sanctions. The trend suggests that "networks for evading sanctions took time to establish during the immediate post-export-control scramble but are now in a position to help Russian airlines source some key parts," said William George, the director of research at Import Genius.

The Russian nationals taken into custody on Thursday began setting up their scheme last May to send aircraft parts from the United States to Russia in violation of export regulations, according to the criminal complaint.

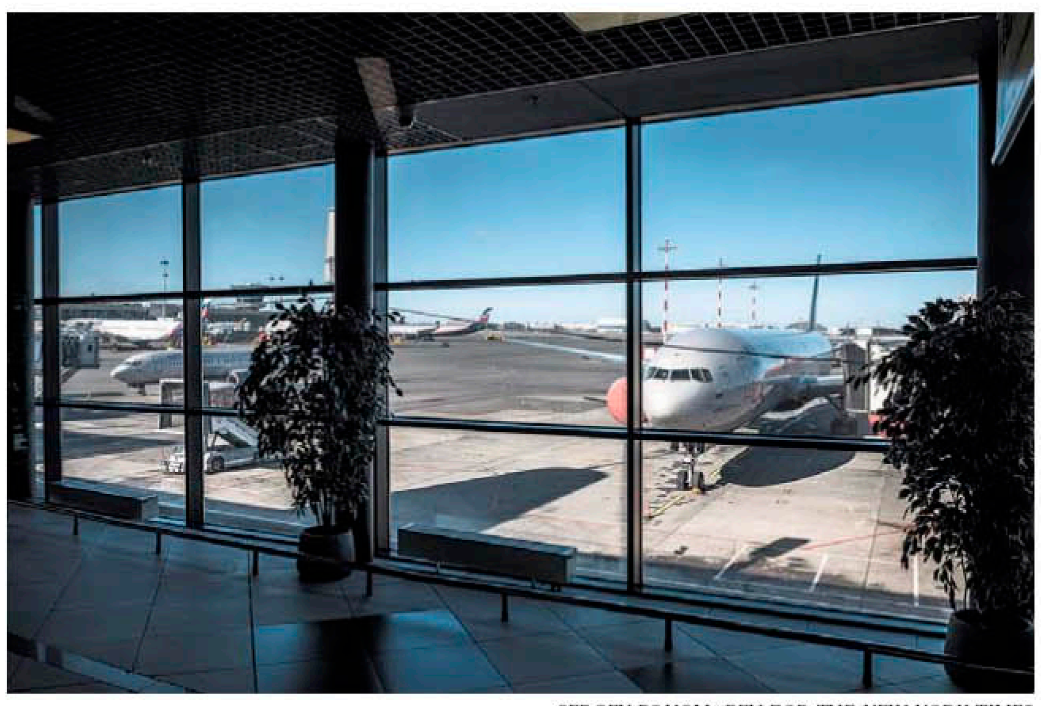
The men are accused of fielding requests for parts, including expensive brake systems for a Boeing 737, from at least three Russian airlines, including two that had been strictly barred from purchasing U.S.-made products through a so-called temporary denial order issued by the Commerce Department. F.B.I. agents raided a condo owned by the men's company in the Trump Towers in Sunny Isles Beach, Fla., on Thursday.

Lawyers for the men did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Despite the level of sanctions evasion, airplane shipments into Russia remain significantly lower than before the war. U.S. officials say Russian airlines have been forced to cannibalize planes, breaking them down for spare parts to keep others in operation, as well as turning to Iran for maintenance and parts.

Russia's imports of aircraft and aircraft parts fell from $3.45 billion annually before the invasion to only about $286 million afterward, according to The Observatory of Economic Complexity, a data visualization platform that explores global trade dynamics.

According to Silverado Policy Accelerator, a Washington nonprofit, China has been the leading overall exporter of parts for aircraft, spacecraft and drones to Russia since the invasion, accounting for about half of all shipments, followed by India.



SERGEY PONOMAREV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Data obtained by The New York Times shows that tens of millions of dollars of aircraft parts were sent to Russian airlines, including Aeroflot.

The number of single-aisle planes in use in Russia fell about 16 percent from the summer of 2021 to the summer of 2022, after the invasion, according to Cirium, an aviation data provider. The number of larger twin-aisle planes, often used on international routes, was down about 40 percent.

Aviation experts say it will become more challenging for Russian airlines to continue flying planes without access to Western suppliers and help from Boeing and Airbus. The manufacturers regularly consult with airlines to assess any damage and strictly control access to technical documentation used by mechanics.

But for now, Russian airlines have been kept alive with the help of international shipments and the use of hundreds of foreign jets that were stranded there after the war began.

Tens of thousands of flights are expected to crisscross Russia this month, according to schedules published by Cirium. More than 21,000 flights — over half of them operated by Russian airlines — are expected to carry passengers to and from countries in Central Asia, as well as Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, China and Thailand.

Half a dozen export control lawyers and former government officials consulted by The New York Times said that many of the shipments in the Import Genius data likely violated sanctions, but that plane makers like Boeing or Airbus were not necessarily at fault. The aviation supply chain is complex and global, and the parts could have come from a variety of sources.

"There is pretty clearly a violation," said William Reinsch, a trade expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies who oversaw export controls during the Clinton administration. "Less clear is the guilty party."

Aircraft parts originating in the European Union, including those marked as being manufactured or trademarked by Airbus, were also shipped into Russia last year, according to the data.

Justin Dubon, a spokesman for Airbus, said that the company keeps track of genuine parts and documentation provided to its customers and conducts due diligence on all parties requesting spare parts. Restrictions in the United States and Europe mean that "there is no legal way that genuine aircraft parts, documentation and services can get to Russian carriers," he said.

U.S. restrictions technically allow companies to apply for a special license to continue sending products to Russian carriers for "safety of flight" reasons, but both Boeing and Airbus said that they had neither sought nor received such a license. In addition, Airbus said that E.U. laws prevent it from shipping such goods to Russia, regardless of U.S. licensing.

Current and former U.S. officials say that some shipments into Russia are to be expected. Kevin Wolf, a partner at the law firm Akin Gump who oversaw export controls during the Obama administration, said the restrictions "can never block everything," but that the rules were still significantly degrading Russia's capabilities.

He added that the scope of the new rules still exceeds current methods of tracking and enforcement in other allied countries. Until the invasion of Ukraine, trade in aircraft parts was mostly unrestricted by the United States and other countries, except to Iran, Cuba, North Korea and Syria.

"It's improving," Mr. Wolf said, "but it's still way, way behind."

Compared with other countries that mostly limit their scrutiny to goods crossing their own borders, the United States is unparalleled in its attempt to police commerce around the world.

In the past three years, the United States has imposed new technology restrictions for Russia, China and Iran that apply extraterritorially: Products made in the United States, or in foreign countries with the help of American components or technology, are subject to U.S. rules even when changing hands on the other side of the world.

Both the United States and the European Union have been ramping up penalties for companies that violate sanctions, and dispatching officials to countries like Kazakhstan to try to persuade them to clamp down on shipments to Russia through their territory. The U.S. government has nine export control officers stationed in Istanbul, Beijing and other locations to trace shipments of sensitive products, and it is setting up three more offices.

But providing parts can be a lucrative business. James Disalvatore, an associate director at Kharon, a data and analytics firm that has been monitoring Russia's efforts to bypass sanctions, said the value of some aircraft parts imported by Russian airlines since the invasion had risen fourfold or more.

"I don't think there's any secret what's going on," said Gary Stanley, a trade compliance expert who advises businesses in aerospace and other industries. "How long have we had Cuban sanctions? How long have we had North Korean sanctions? How long have we had Iranian sanctions? It never seems to put these folks out of business."

War in Ukraine





Messages written on 82-millimeter mortar rounds, left, near Toretsk, in eastern Ukraine. Right, a soldier wrote on shells before they were fired at Russian positions.

Sending a Message With Their Bombs. And on Them, Too.

By MARIA VARENIKOVA

TORETSK, Ukraine — The Ukrainian artilleryman was all set to slide the explosive shell into a launcher and send it on its way toward Russian positions — but first he had to take care of one last thing on his checklist.

"For Uman," he scrawled on the side of the projectile with a felt-tip marker.

Then he ducked away as it roared off on a fiery trajectory to the front line.

Uman is the Ukrainian city where more than two dozen civilians were killed last month in a Russian rocket attack. But it is hardly the only city Russia has attacked, and the message on the shell was also only one of many.

After more than a year of war, Ukrainians have a lot to say to Russia, and many have chosen to say it on the sides of rockets, mortar shells and even exploding drones. Thousands of messages have been sent, ranging from the sardonic to the bitter, among them one from Valentyna Vikhorieva, whose 33-year-old son died in the war.

"For Yura, from Mom," Ms. Vikhorieva asked an artillery unit to write on a shell. "Burn in hell for our children."

Ms. Vikhorieva said her son, a Ukrainian soldier, was killed last spring by a Russian artillery shell.

"I will never forget," she said in an interview. "And he will always be my boy."

It is more than just venting.

Charity groups and even the military have seized on the desire of Ukrainians to voice their anger as a mechanism to raise funds — never mind that however well-crafted the messages, the Russians are unlikely ever to read them. The shell cases, of course, generally explode into smithereens. And if they hit their target, their intended recipients may be in no condition to appreciate them.

But for some Ukrainians, it still feels like justice, if only symbolically, said Victoria Semko, a psychologist who works with people who endured the brutal Russian occupation of Irpin, a suburb of Kyiv.

"People are in pain because of the loss, personal and national," Ms. Semko said. "It is normal when aggression is directed at the guilty parties."

The cost of the messages varies. They are essentially a mechanism for encouraging donations, and people are asked to give what they can. Revenge For, one of the groups behind the campaign, says it once got a donation of $10,000. But sometimes there is no charge at all.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAURICIO LIMA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Firing a rocket-propelled grenade near Bakhmut last month. People donate money to have personal messages placed on munitions.

It is not just Ukrainians who have paid for messages. The groups behind the campaign say people from Eastern Europe still angry over the long years of Soviet rule have also written in. Oleksandr Arhat, a co-founder of one group raising money for the military through the messages, Militarny, offered some examples.

There was the writer from Israel who wanted to avenge the torture death of a grandfather by Soviet Internal Affairs. There was the Czech who wanted to commemorate the Prague Spring of 1968, when the Soviet Army put down protests. "Russians Go Home" wrote a Hungarian denouncing the Soviet invasion of his country in 1956.

But most of the message requests have come from within Ukraine, Mr. Arhat said.

One retiree, Yuriy Medynsky, 84, said he had drawn on his meager benefits to send a message not once but repeatedly to honor his grandson, who was 33 when he was killed fighting in the Kharkiv region last spring.

"To Katsap hermits for Maksym Medynsky. Grandpa," he wrote, using an epithet for the Russians.

"I put in my message all the hate I feel for Muscovites," Mr. Medynsky said. He paid about $13 for each message.

Remembering lost ones or venting fury at Russian forces.

His daughter-in-law, Tetyana Medynska, Maksym's widow, has also sent repeated messages.

"Personally for me it's a tiny bit of revenge," she said. "I do not imagine killing someone particular, as they are all guilty, all Russians who came to Ukraine. They have no faces for me. When I send money for the message on the bombs, I feel some kind of psychological relief."

Some have struck a tone of irony.

"When my friend got married, she asked to write her maiden name on the mortar, to say farewell to it," said Private Vladyslav, a soldier at a mortar position outside the town of Toretsk, in eastern Ukraine.

He himself once sent a message: "I congratulated my mom on her birthday this way," Private Vladyslav said.

At that moment, he was preparing an 82-millimeter mortar with a message from a comrade, Private Borys Khodorkovsky, who was celebrating his 50th birthday at the front.

"I want those devils to know that I am here, and want them to feel bad," Private Khodorkovsky said. "Psychologically, I know that this mortar will hit something and fewer of my brothers in arms will die, and fewer Russians will shoot at us."

But most messages seethe with unvarnished fury.

"For the destroyed childhood," wrote Dmytro Yakovenko, 38, a pharmacist. He has two daughters, 11 and 14. The family lived through the harrowing bombardment and then evacuation of their hometown, Lozova, in the Kharkiv region.

"My daughters' childhood is destroyed," he said. "I want Russians to know why this mortar is flying their way."

The unit that fired the mortar with a message for Ms. Vikhorieva, whose son was killed fighting, is a small one. Its members say that they have used the money raised by selling messages to repair vehicles, and that they have fired more than 200 personalized mortar shells to date.

"I feel uneasy when a person orders a message for the loss of a loved one, and I know that nothing will change," said Ihor Slaiko, the commander. "But I still sign them."

His men dutifully inscribe the words onto the shell — and then send them toward Russian lines with a boom.

Lukashenko Is Absent, And Rumors Are Growing

By ANDREW HIGGINS

Amid swirling rumors about the health of President Aleksandr G. Lukashenko of Belarus, state news media on Monday released photographs of him, an apparent attempt to tamp down speculation that he was seriously ill.

Mr. Lukashenko, a key Kremlin ally who usually receives fawning daily coverage from state-controlled news media featuring photos and videos, had not been shown since last Tuesday, when he attended events in Moscow and the Belarusian capital, Minsk, celebrating the Soviet Union's triumph over Nazi Germany in 1945.

He skipped an annual ceremony on Sunday in Minsk for Belarus's flag day, an event at which he usually speaks, leaving his prime minister to read a statement.

Europe's longest serving leader and an avid sportsman, Mr. Lukashenko, 68, has since 1994 ruled Belarus, a former Soviet republic that depends on Moscow for financial aid and security assistance, with a firm grip. In the past he has relished showing off his robust good health in public by rollerblading, playing ice hockey, and giving long speeches outdoors, regardless of the weather.

But the official Belarusian news agency, Belta, and state television had for the past week recycled old photographs and film clips of him.

Ukrainian officials and media fed a swirl of gleeful rumors around the health of Mr. Lukashenko, who is widely reviled in Ukraine for allowing Russia to use Belarus, which borders both nations, as a staging ground for its full-scale invasion in February 2022.

An opposition news outlet, Euroradio, reported that Mr. Lukashenko had been taken by motorcade to a Minsk clinic on Saturday, but the country has not officially commented on his health.

In what could be the most conclusive sign that he was ill, though perhaps not gravely, Russia's tightly controlled news media — which rarely comment on leaders' health — have in recent days reported that Mr. Lukashenko is unwell, citing Konstantin Zatulin, a senior Russian legislator who works closely with Belarus and other former Soviet republics.

Mr. Zatulin was quoted as saying of Mr. Lukashenko that "he just got sick but it is not Covid." He gave no details and downplayed the severity of Mr. Lukashenko's condition.

On Monday, Belta said that Mr. Lukashenko visited an air force command post and published what it said were photos of the leader that day. It was not immediately possible to independently confirm whether the photos were taken on Monday.

The intense secrecy of closed countries like Belarus and Russia exacerbates wild rumors about their leaders. For instance, President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia is regularly rumored to have multiple fatal diseases.

The secrecy also makes it difficult to explain the deaths of apparently healthy officials, like Vladimir Makei, the veteran Belarusian foreign minister whose sudden death in November set off feverish speculation of foul play.

Nataliia Novosolova and Riley Mellen contributed reporting.

Advances Near Bakhmut Pressure Russian Troops

This article is by ***Marc Santora, Carlotta Gall*** *and* ***Oleksandr Chubko.***

DONBAS REGION, Ukraine — Ukrainian soldiers made further advances around Bakhmut over the weekend, the country's deputy defense minister said on Monday, putting pressure on Russian positions on the city's flanks as Ukraine tries to retake momentum after months of being on the defensive.

While the battle inside the city continues to rage, the Ukrainian success around Bakhmut — while limited — presents Russian commanders with the difficult choice of whether to send reinforcements, which could weaken positions elsewhere in the face of Kyiv's looming counteroffensive.

Hanna Maliar, the deputy defense minister, said on Monday that "against all odds, our troops managed to advance for several days." A day earlier, she reported that Kyiv's forces had "captured more than 10 enemy positions" after punching through Russian lines north and south of Bakhmut last week.

It was not possible to independently verify her claims. While Russia's Ministry of Defense acknowledged on Friday that its forces had retreated in one segment around Bakhmut, it claimed on Sunday that "there has been no breakthrough" against Russian lines and that all Ukrainian attacks had been repelled. But in a rare acknowledgment of high-level casualties, it also said that two Russian colonels were killed in the fighting around the city.

Ukraine's advances around Bakhmut have been the country's first significant gains in the monthslong battle for the devastated city. At the same time, Russian forces control about 90 percent of Bakhmut, and have continued to pound the last remaining Ukrainian positions inside the city limits.

Both sides have suffered heavy casualties in the fight for Bakhmut. Since December alone, the United States estimates that more than 20,000 Russian soldiers have been killed in Ukraine, many around the city.

The Ukrainians are now seeking to take advantage of Russia's losses by attacking positions around the city that they were forced from over the winter, and they could be trying to encircle Russian forces inside the ruins of Bakhmut.



TYLER HICKS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

The 28th Mechanized Brigade of the Ukrainian Army near Bakhmut, Ukraine, last week. The army has made gains.

Maj. Oleksandr Pantsyrny, 26, the commander of Ukraine's 24th Separate Assault Battalion, or Aidar, said he led an operation that resulted in a breakthrough against Russian flanks in the area of Bakhmut last week. Over three days, his battalion recaptured several miles of territory, he said. His account of the fighting could not be independently confirmed.

Major Pantsyrny said the Ukrainian breakthrough came as units of Russia's Wagner mercenary group, which has spearheaded the assault on Bakhmut, began withdrawing units from outlying suburbs early this month in order to regroup.

"We were watching," he said in a telephone interview on Sunday. "They started step by step, handing over positions and moving troops for assaults inside Bakhmut."

He said the Ukrainians spotted a weakness as the Wagner troops rotated out and hit Russian Army units as they arrived to take over. The next day, he said, his troops followed with a second assault against arriving Russian reinforcements.

"We guessed the right moment of the rotation," Major Pantsyrny said, adding that the Russian defenders were unfamiliar with the terrain and "not used to such intensity of combat."

Even as Ukrainian soldiers advanced along the rolling hills and open plains north and south of Bakhmut, the battle inside the ruined city was a different story. Russian forces have captured nearly all of the city over months of bitter fighting, with the remaining Ukrainian defenders confined to a small western section and facing relentless assault.

On Monday, Russia's Defense Ministry said that assault units, supported by airborne troops, continued to battle for the western neighborhoods of Bakhmut.

"Things are difficult in Bakhmut and the surrounding area," Ms. Maliar, the Ukrainian deputy defense minister, said on Monday, adding that "heavy fighting continues."

Where else can you watch the biggest music videos, every landmark global moment, and the most breathtaking performances of all time?

Where else can you watch every trailer ever made, every single sports highlight, and then go learn how to fix your bike?

Where else can you find millions of incredible creators, phenomenal storytellers who document our culture, our dreams, and our triumphs?

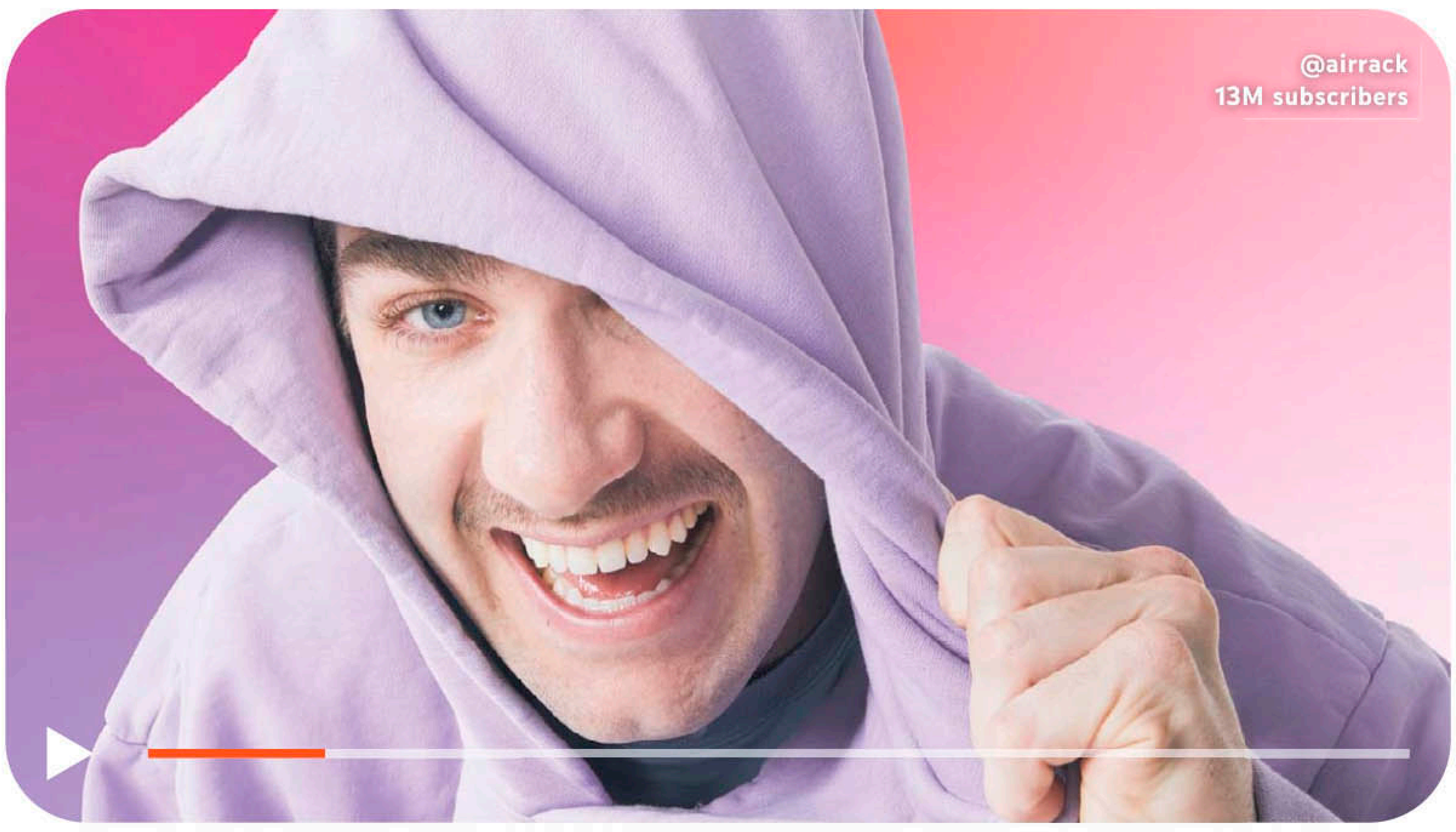
Truth is, there's only one place that offers all this.

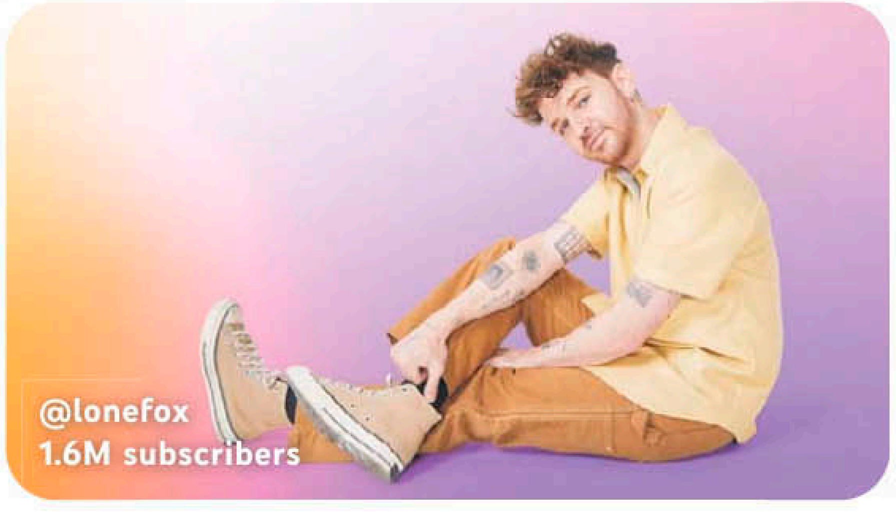
IN A WORLD WHERE YOU CAN WATCH ANYTHING,
THE WORLD WATCHES YOUTUBE







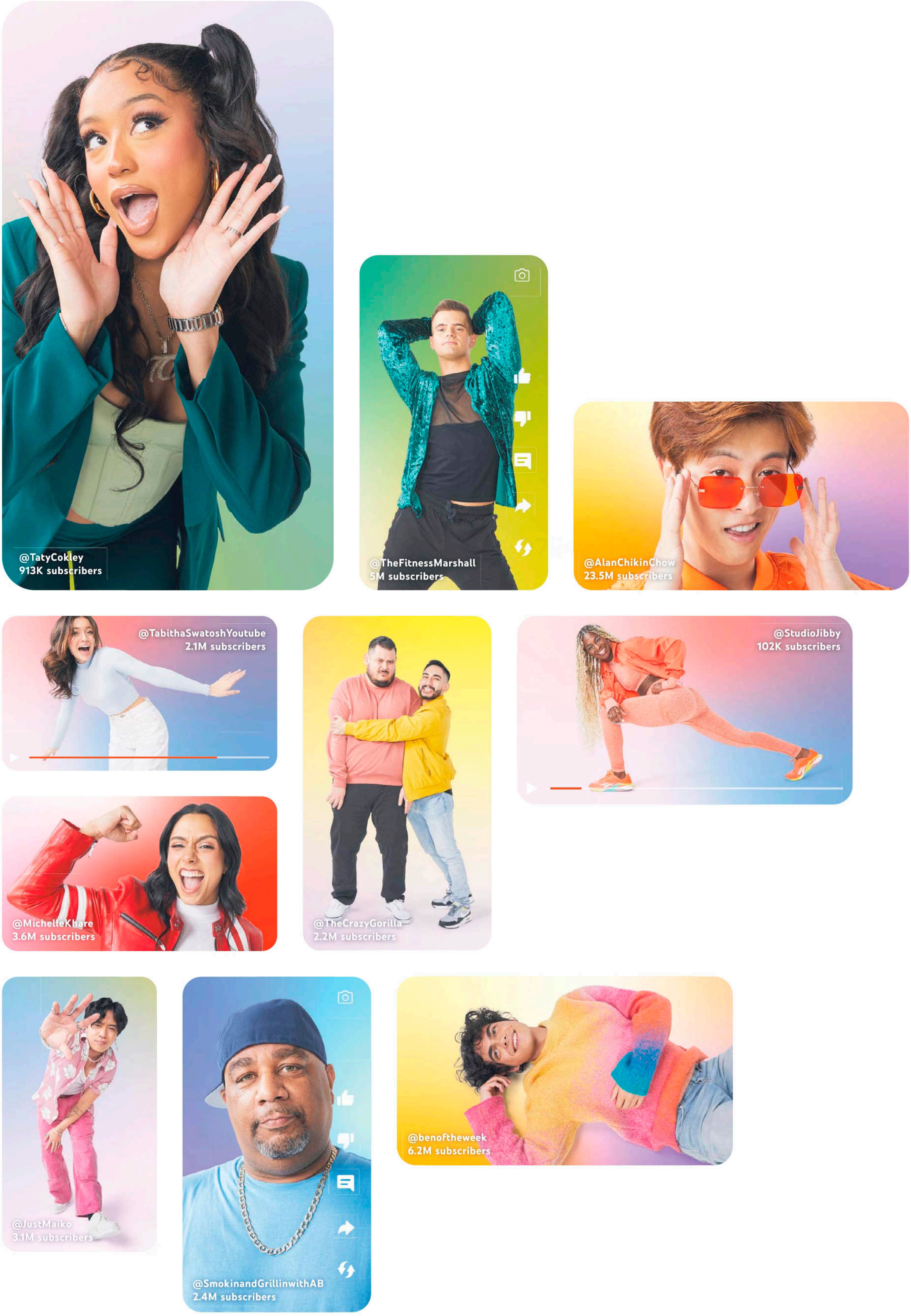











@TatyCokley
913K subscribers
@TheFitnessMarshall
5M subscribers
@AlanChikinChow
23.5M subscribers
@TabithaSwatoshYoutube
2.1M subscribers
@StudioJibby
102K subscribers
@MichelleKhare
3.6M subscribers
@TheCrazyGorilla
2.2M subscribers
@JustMaiko
3.1M subscribers
@SmokinandGrillinwithAB
2.4M subscribers
@benoftheweek
6.2M subscribers

Brandcast



SAI AUNG MAIN/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

A broken bridge at the Khaung Dote Khar Rohingya refugee camp in Sittwe, a city in Myanmar that was almost entirely destroyed. Two people reportedly died there.

Cyclone Leaves Thousands Homeless in Bangladesh and Myanmar

By SAIF HASNAT and SUHASINI RAJ

Hundreds of thousands of people began repairing or rebuilding their homes and livelihoods on Monday after a deadly cyclone hit Myanmar and Bangladesh over the weekend.

The storm, named Mocha, killed several people in Myanmar, though there were conflicting accounts from leaders as to exactly how many. The Myanmar government said the number was five, but the shadow government, called the National Unity Government, which may have more sources in the country's remote conflict zones, said it was 18.

Though the damage from the powerful storm was not as dire as predicted, there were still hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees left homeless, along with reports of people stranded and having to make their way through storm debris to get home.

The damage in Myanmar was mostly confined to Rakhine State, Chin State and other areas in the west, according to officials and aid workers.

Ko Myo Khaing, a rescue worker in the city of Sittwe, the capital of Rakhine State, said two people were reported to have died in her area.

"At least 90 percent of Sittwe was destroyed by the storm," she said. "The electricity is still out and the phone lines are down. The number of people affected is unknown, due to communication difficulties."

Khaing Thu Kha, a spokesman for the Arakan Army, an ethnic Rakhine militia, said that food collected for the emergency was damaged by the rain, and that while floodwaters in Sittwe had receded, they were still high in other areas.



AL-EMRUN GARJON/ASSOCIATED PRESS

A family resting inside their damaged home in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, where a total of 13,000 houses were damaged or destroyed and 250,000 people are in need of food and shelter.

"Since it is impossible for us to help with our revolutionary forces alone, I would like to ask neighboring countries, including the U.N., to help," the spokesman said.

In Chin State, where phone and internet lines have been cut since Myanmar's generals staged a coup in February 2021, communication was restored for a short while just before the cyclone struck. But that was not enough.

"We didn't have enough time to tell people to evacuate," said Salai Mang Hre Lian, the program manager of the Chin Human Rights Organization.

Although there were no immediate reports of fatalities in Chin State, Mr. Lian said more than a thousand people were stranded in the forests, in urgent need of shelter, food, and medicine, and had been unable to make it back to their homes. Transportation was harrowing; travelers had to brave military patrols and unexploded ordinance, along with the effects of the storm itself. Those conditions also made it hard to deliver relief supplies.

Before the cyclone made landfall, its strong winds and rain tore through the tarpaulin-and-bamboo shanties of the Rohingya refugees who live in threadbare camps along Bangladesh's coastline. More than a million Rohingya people sought refuge in Bangladesh after fleeing persecution in Rakhine State, and they now inhabit the world's largest encampment.

The storm came ashore on Sunday afternoon in the coastal area around Cox's Bazar, right at Bangladesh's border with Myanmar, according to Bangladesh's meteorological department. At that time, it was packing winds of up to 155 miles per hour, according to estimates from the Joint Typhoon Warning Center just before landfall.

Videos posted to social media showed men and women wading in water and surrounded by broken electrical poles, blown-out tile roofs, pieces of billboards and crumpled metal sheeting.

In Bangladesh, where no deaths were immediately reported, around 3,000 Rohingya shelters were damaged by the cyclone, and some were completely destroyed, officials said. The office of Bangladesh's commissioner for refugees reported that 32 learning centers and 29 mosques were damaged.

The refugee camps, which stretch over rolling, muddy terrain, suffered 120 landslides during the storm, and at least 5,300 refugees were relocated to more secure locations. In the wider Cox's Bazar region, a total of 13,000 houses were damaged or destroyed. About 250,000 people were in need of food and shelter by Sunday evening, according to Bangladesh's government.

In the Cox's Bazar area, 25-year-old Arefa, who goes by one name and lives with her husband and two children, ages 6 and 4, described in horror how the storm brought a tree down onto her bamboo-and-plastic shanty. The family escaped unhurt and took refuge at a community leader's home.

"I lay down on the floor of someone's home with my children beside me, thinking, 'Will we go on like this our entire lives?'" she said, her voice shaking.

A series of fires and floods have ravaged the Rohingya camps over the past six years, but Ms. Arefa's shanty had only been damaged once before — two years ago, when another storm blew away its tarpaulin roofing. Life had already been tough for her family in Myanmar, even before October 2016, when armed forces came to her village and set it on fire. Her family was left homeless and had no choice but to flee to Bangladesh, she said, a journey that took several days on foot.

Now they are going to have to start again. She came back to her battered shanty this morning, she said, to find that someone had stolen the cooking gas cylinder. "We want to go home to Myanmar, but there is no hope of that happening anytime soon," she said. "My two children, I don't see any future for them."

Judson Jones contributed reporting.

As Japan Unmasks, Coach Is Giving Lessons in Smiling



CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Keiko Kawano, a smile coach in Japan, has been helping her clients learn to smile again after years of covered faces.

By HISAKO UENO and MIKE IVES

TOKYO — About six years ago, Keiko Kawano, a radio host, found that when she stopped doing voice-articulation exercises, her smile began to fade. At a certain point, she struggled to lift the corners of her mouth.

So Ms. Kawano, then 43, decided to learn how facial muscles work. After using the knowledge to reanimate her smile, she started helping others do the same under the motto, "More smile, more happiness."

And as many people in Japan unmask after three years and find their facial expressions a bit rusty, she is adapting her work to the post-Covid era.

"People have not been raising their cheeks under a mask or trying to smile much," Ms. Kawano said last week, a few days after Japan downgraded Covid-19 to the same status as common illnesses. "Now, they're at a loss."

Ms. Kawano began teaching smiling at a gym in 2017 while working as a business etiquette trainer.

Despite having no medical training, her curriculum, typically taught in one-hour sessions online or in person, draws on yoga and emphasizes strengthening the zygomatic muscles, which pull the corners of the mouth. She also believes that the muscles just below the eyes are key and that weak ones create eyebrow-driven smiles, which can make the forehead look wrinkly.

After her gig at the gym, she began teaching smiling at nursing homes and corporate offices, as well as to individuals hoping that a better smile might help to land better jobs or improve marriage prospects. One early client was IBM Japan, where she held a smiling-training session for company employees and their families.

Then the pandemic hit, hurting her business by hiding everyone's smiles behind face masks. Still, Ms. Kawano was occasionally asked for advice on smiling through them.

Mask wearing was not legally enforced in Japan during the pandemic, but it became ubiquitous anyway, in part because Japanese people have been masking for decades as protection against allergies or pollution or as a courtesy to protect others from illness.

Ms. Kawano told her clients that the key to a masked smile was lifting the eye muscles. A TV presenter demonstrated her method on a national broadcast, she said, and a post about it online helped to raise her profile.

But the biggest spike in demand for her services came in February, she said, when the government announced that official masking recommendations would be significantly loosened.

"People started realizing that they hadn't used their cheek or mouth muscles very much," Ms. Kawano said, speaking by phone while on a trip to South Korea, where she had an appointment for a facial that she said would be good for her cheekbones. "And you can't just suddenly start using these muscles. You need to work on them."

Yael Hanein, an expert on facial expressions, said she was not aware of any academic studies documenting the effects of long-term masking on facial muscles.

"Facial muscles can be trained like other muscles, although such training could be challenging, owing to large variability between individuals," said Professor Hanein, who runs a neuro-engineering lab at Tel Aviv University in Israel.

"A possible problem with a practiced or faked smile is that it may be identified as such by other people," she added.

There have been other smile-training classes in modern Japan, usually for retail employees. But in a Japanese social context, smiling is far less important than bowing. Some Japanese women are also acculturated to cover their mouths when eating or laughing.

"Smiling lessons seem very Western," said Tomohisa Sumida, a visiting researcher at Keio University who has studied the history of masking in Japan.

But Ms. Kawano's clients appear to be happy with her work.

Miki Okamoto, a spokeswoman for IBM Japan, said that Ms. Kawano's smile-training session was "received well."

In Kanagawa Prefecture, south of Tokyo, about 40 seniors attended a 90-minute session with Ms. Kawano in October, and many found that it improved their smiles, said Katsuyo Iwahashi, a town official who works on public health programs. Ms. Iwahashi added that the town plans to offer a similar session specifically for mothers with young children "in the hope of helping them to smile despite the hardships that they experience," in motherhood and following the pandemic.

Ms. Kawano also holds a one-day certification training for people who want to teach smiling for 80,000 yen, plus consumption tax, about $650.

One of her protégés, Rieko Mae, 61, now tells her own clients that smile practice is important even for people who smile a lot naturally.

"Sometimes, you need to show a nice, professional smile, and people don't know much about that," said Ms. Mae, who lives in Osaka and traveled to Tokyo for the course.

A smile-training course could help people improve their facial expressions and even build self-confidence, said Masami Yamaguchi, a psychologist at Chuo University who has studied how babies look at the facial expressions of their mothers.

"Intentional muscle moves will send signals to your brain and generate positive feelings, even if you are not feeling happy," she said.

Hisako Ueno reported from Tokyo, and Mike Ives from Seoul.

In Japan, Abuse Claims Spur Apology At Pop Firm

By HISAKO UENO and YAN ZHUANG

TOKYO — One of Japan's most influential entertainment production companies has issued an apology over sexual assault claims leveled against its founder, Johnny Kitagawa, decades after allegations about abuse of young men in his care first came to light.

Accusations that Mr. Kitagawa forced sex on the boys who signed onto his agency, Johnny & Associates, in the hopes it would catapult them to pop stardom had been made decades ago. And over a dozen former trainees have spoken out. But Mr. Kitagawa, a titan of Japan's entertainment industry credited with helping to create the J-pop boy bands that were popular among Asian fans before the K-pop boom, has faced little public scrutiny even after his death in 2019.

In March, the accusations against him were the focus of an hourlong documentary by the BBC, which interviewed three accusers. As several other accusers came forward after the it aired, public pressure mounted for the agency to respond.

On Sunday, the chief executive of Johnny & Associates and Mr. Kitagawa's niece, Julie Keiko Fujishima, apologized in a written and video statement published on its website.

"I would like to express my apology from bottom of my heart for the social problems caused by the sexual assault cases of Kitagawa, our founder," Ms. Fujishima said.

Ms. Fujishima said the company took the accusations "very seriously" but stopped short of confirming or denying them. "I don't think those issues didn't happen at all," she said, "However, it's not easy for me to confirm if allegations are true or not without confirming with Johnny Kitagawa."

She added that she had not been aware of the accusations against Mr. Kitagawa.

Mr. Kitagawa was never criminally charged over the accusations and consistently denied them.

Mr. Kitagawa's accusers have said that he made sexual advances toward them while they trained to rise through the ranks of his talent agency, which is known for producing some of the biggest pop groups in Japan.

Most of the accusers have been anonymous. But last month, Japanese Brazilian singer Kauan Okamoto came forward with his account of being repeatedly sexually abused by Mr. Kitagawa during the four years he was at the agency between 2012 and 2016. He was abused between 15 and 20 times, starting from when he was 15, he said at a news conference.

Mr. Okamoto said in an interview with The New York Times that he felt he could not resist Mr. Kitagawa's advances if he wanted to continue at the production company. "I had to be determined to quit if I were to resist," he said.

Mr. Okamoto was unaware of the allegations when he first signed to the agency, he said. After he joined, "Other boys asked me, 'Have you been assaulted?'" he said. "I said, 'What?' They said, 'Oh, you haven't yet.'"

Many accusers, including Mr. Okamoto, have said that they still are grateful to Mr. Kitagawa.

"I wouldn't have made it that far on the stage without him," Mr. Okamoto said. "You feel like he is nearly a family member. So many people are thankful to him."

Over 18,000 people have signed a petition calling for the company to conduct an independent investigation into the accusations. However, Ms. Fujishima has rejected the idea, saying that some victims may not want to participate in an investigation. She added that the company would instead provide "consultation services" where victims can speak to counselors, lawyers and doctors.

Some journalists and media experts have also questioned how Ms. Fujishima was not aware of the accusations.

"If Julie Fujishima 'didn't know' about the abuse, why not simply tell that to all the journalists (including myself) who contacted her agency about claims of abuse in 2023, 2019, 2005, 2000, 1999, 1988," David McNeill, a professor of communications at Sacred Heart University in Tokyo, said on Twitter.

The first public accusation made against Mr. Kitagawa from someone who said he had experienced abuse came in 1988. Koji Kita, a member of one of the agency's earliest successful boy bands, wrote a book detailing allegations of sexual abuse at the hands of Mr. Kitagawa and how other male teenage trainees had experienced abuse. His account prompted a string of similar accusations from other former trainees.

Hisako Ueno reported from Tokyo, and Yan Zhuang from Sydney, Australia.

The New York Times

New Mayor's Mission: Lift Chicago From Its Pandemic Funk

Policing, Migrants, Schools and Commerce Loom Large in Nation's Third-Largest City

By JULIE BOSMAN and MITCH SMITH

It wasn't long ago that Brandon Johnson, 47, was a county commissioner and teachers' union organizer, unknown to many Chicagoans. On Monday he was sworn in as the city's 57th mayor.

Mr. Johnson's rapid ascent from political obscurity to the helm of America's third-largest city was fueled by an unapologetically progressive platform, a gift for retail campaigning and enthusiastic support and money from organized labor. He knocked out the incumbent mayor, Lori Lightfoot, in the first round of balloting in February, then beat Paul Vallas, a far more conservative and well-funded Democrat, in the runoff last month.

Now comes the hard part.

Mr. Johnson inherits a proud city that has not fully emerged from its pandemic funk. Chicago's downtown is emptier, its public schools have fewer students, and crime rates remain far higher than before the pandemic.

In an interview last week at his transition office along the Chicago River, Mr. Johnson said he was cleareyed about the scope of the challenges awaiting him but confident about the city's trajectory.

Here are some of the biggest issues facing Chicago, and what he had to say about them:

The city needs a new police superintendent.

"It's important that the city of Chicago has confidence in the superintendent. That's someone who understands constitutional policing, but someone who also understands that public safety is an overall goal that cannot be confined to policing."

The superintendent selected by Ms. Lightfoot, David Brown, resigned after she lost re-election, leaving the embattled Chicago Police Department under interim leadership. Mr. Johnson, who before running for mayor expressed support for removing some law enforcement funding, will soon have to select a permanent superintendent.

Mr. Johnson said he would seek someone who understands Chicago and could earn the trust of rank-and-file officers, but also someone who shared his view of policing as just one part of a broader safety strategy. He said the new superintendent must be willing to work with newly elected councils of residents created to provide feedback and to make suggestions on law enforcement in each of the city's police districts.

Chicago has struggled to house an influx of migrants.

"We are a sanctuary city. There's an incredible history of the city of Chicago being a welcoming space for families across the country and across the world."

Mr. Johnson inherits an escalating crisis: the increasingly large stream of Venezuelans and other migrants arriving by bus and plane from border states and seeking shelter in Chicago. In the last several weeks, the number of migrants entering Chicago has multiplied, filling city shelters and overwhelming police stations, where migrants have been dropped off. With the lifting last week of Title 42, a federal policy that allowed the United States to expel many people who crossed the southern border before they could apply for asylum, even more migrants are expected to flow into Chicago.

The influx is both a problem and an opportunity for Chicago, a city that grew in population from 2010 to 2020, but then saw those gains erased during the pandemic, when thousands of residents moved out. Mr. Johnson said he intended to help welcome the migrants, but added that he also wanted to make sure that Black families who have been in the city for decades are not cut out from city resources.

Public education presents a formidable test.

"There's no greater institution to transform in this moment. Our public school system has to be transformed."

A former social studies teacher, Mr. Johnson most recently worked as an organizer for the Chicago Teachers Union, a progressive and politically powerful organization that engaged in repeated work stoppages during his tenure and was a chief antagonist of the most recent two mayors.

Mr. Johnson has spoken repeatedly of investing in neighborhood schools as a way to address the city's broader challenges. He said he envisioned "an education system that exposes our children to as many industries as possible in a real, tangible way," with a far greater focus on connecting high school graduates with career opportunities, including in trades that do not require a college degree.

Downtown still lacks its prepandemic swagger.

"I believe it's a unique opportunity for this generation to set a course that could be studied a century from now."

Downtown is not going to look the same as it did before the pandemic, Mr. Johnson said. But precisely what it will become is less clear.

Mr. Johnson said he sees a chance to build on existing industries, especially in the life sciences, a sector that has seen recent growth. During his mayoral transition, Mr. Johnson has met with business and civic leaders downtown, a group that largely supported his opponent, Mr. Vallas.

And Mr. Johnson will be the face of the city during one of its newest and most divisive events: a NASCAR street race downtown this summer. Mr. Johnson said he intended to carry out the new car racing event with "care and sensitivity," but also hoped to build on the slate of more established festivals and activities the city offers, especially those that appeal to younger people.

Public safety remains a huge concern.

"Do you know what safe communities do all over the country? You know what they do? They invest in people."

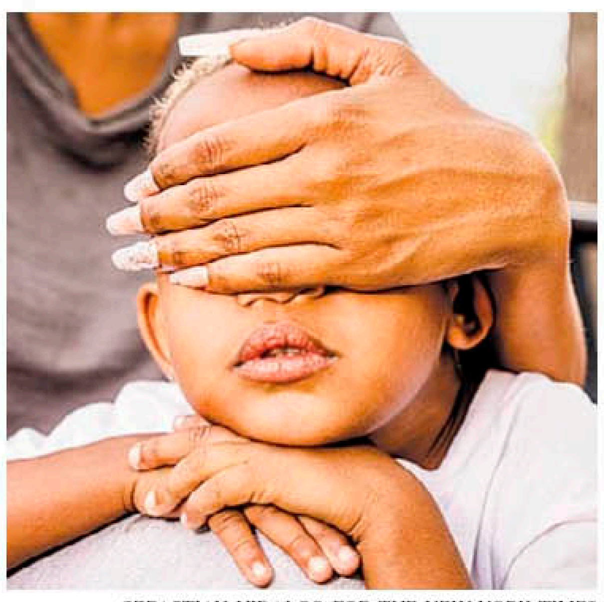
Mr. Johnson spoke on the campaign trail of investments in communities that have seen the most violent crime, especially the South Side and the West Side, where he lives. People will feel safer, he said, when they have strong neighborhood schools, low unemployment and access to mental health services.

Those goals feel long term, but Mr. Johnson also says he hopes to make immediate changes like doubling the number of young people who have work after school and in the summer.



ANDI RICE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Mayor Brandon Johnson's rapid ascent from little-known county commissioner to the leader of a major American city was fueled by an unapologetically progressive platform, a gift for retail campaigning and support from organized labor.



SEBASTIAN HIDALGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

SANCTUARY CITY The number of migrants has multiplied, filling shelters and overwhelming police stations.



JAMIE KELTER DAVIS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS The mayor will try to connect high school graduates with career opportunities.



MUSTAFA HUSSAIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

POLICING David Brown's resignation as superintendent leaves the department under interim leadership.

16 Crucial Words That Went Missing From a Landmark Civil Rights Law

ADAM LIPTAK

SIDEBAR

WASHINGTON — In a routine decision in March, a unanimous three-judge panel of a federal appeals court ruled against a Texas inmate who was injured when the ceiling of the hog barn he was working in collapsed. The court, predictably, said the inmate could not overcome qualified immunity, the much-criticized legal shield that protects government officials from suits for constitutional violations.

The author of the decision, Judge Don R. Willett, then did something unusual. He issued a separate concurring opinion to draw attention to the "game-changing arguments" in a recent law review article, one that seemed to demonstrate that the Supreme Court's entire qualified immunity jurisprudence was based on a mistake.

"Wait, what?" Judge Willett wrote, incredulous.

In 1871, after the Civil War, Congress enacted a law that allowed suits against state officials for violations of constitutional rights. But the Supreme Court has said that the law, usually called Section 1983, did not displace immunities protecting officials that existed when the law was enacted. The doctrine of qualified immunity is based on that premise.

But the premise is wrong, Alexander A. Reinert, a professor at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, wrote in the article, "Qualified Immunity's Flawed Foundation," published in The California Law Review.

Between 1871, when the law was enacted, and 1874, when a government official produced the first compilation of federal laws, Professor Reinert wrote, 16 words of the original law went missing. Those words, Professor Reinert wrote, showed that Congress had indeed overridden existing immunities.

Judge Willett considered the implications of the finding.

"What if the Reconstruction Congress had explicitly stated — right there in the original statutory text — that it was nullifying all common-law defenses against Section 1983 actions?" Judge Willett asked. "That is, what if Congress's literal language unequivocally negated the original interpretive premise for qualified immunity?"

The original version of the law, the one that was enacted in 1871, said state officials who subject "any person within the jurisdiction of the United States to the deprivation of any rights, privileges or immunities secured by the Constitution of the United States, shall, *any such law, statute, ordinance, regulation, custom or usage of the state to the contrary notwithstanding*, be liable to the party injured in any action at law, suit in equity, or other proper proceeding for redress."

The words in italics, for reasons lost to history, were omitted from the first compilation of federal laws in 1874, which was prepared by a government official called "the reviser of the federal statutes."

"The reviser's error, whether one of omission or commission, has never been corrected," Judge Willett wrote.

The logic of the Supreme Court's qualified immunity jurisprudence is that Congress would not have displaced existing immunities without saying so. But Professor Reinert argued that Congress did say so, in so many words.

"The omitted language confirms that the Reconstruction Congress in 1871 intended to provide a broad remedy for civil rights violations by state officials," Professor Reinert said in an interview, noting that the law was enacted soon after the three constitutional amendments ratified after the Civil War: to outlaw slavery, insist on equal protection and guard the right to vote.

"Along with other contemporaneous evidence, including legislative history, it helps to show that Congress meant to fully enforce the Reconstruction Amendments via a powerful new cause of action," Professor Reinert said.

Judge Willett, who was appointed by President Donald J. Trump, focused on the words of the original statute "in this text-centric judicial era when jurists profess unswerving fidelity to the words Congress chose."

Questioning a legal shield protecting police officers from misconduct suits.

Qualified immunity, which requires plaintiffs to show that the officials had violated a constitutional right that was clearly established in a previous ruling, has been widely criticized by scholars and judges across the ideological spectrum. Justice Clarence Thomas, for instance, wrote that it does not appear to resemble the immunities available in 1871.

Professor Reinert's article said that "is only half the story."

"The real problem," he wrote, "is that no qualified immunity doctrine at all should apply in Section 1983 actions, if courts stay true to the text adopted by the enacting Congress."

Joanna Schwartz, a law professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, and the author of "Shielded: How the Police Became Untouchable," said that "there is general agreement that the qualified immunity doctrine, as it currently operates, looks nothing like any protections that may have existed in 1871." The new article, she said, identified "additional causes for skepticism."

She added that "Judge Willett's concurring opinion has brought much-needed, and well-deserved, attention to Alex Reinert's insightful article."

Judge Willett wrote that he and his colleagues are "middle-management circuit judges" who cannot overrule Supreme Court decisions. "Only that court," he wrote, "can definitively grapple with Section 1983's enacted text and decide whether it means what it says."

Lawyers for the injured Texas inmate, Kevion Rogers, said they were weighing their options.

"The scholarship that Judge Willett unearthed in his concurrence is undoubtedly important to the arguments that civil rights litigants can make in the future," the lawyers, Matthew J. Kita and Damon Mathias, said in a statement.

"Normally," they added, "you cannot raise a new argument for reversal for the first time on appeal, much less at the Supreme Court of the United States. But one would think that if the Supreme Court acknowledges that *it* has been reciting and applying the statute incorrectly for nearly a century, there must be *some* remedy available to litigants whose judgments are not yet final."

The robocalls use a 'soundboard' preloaded with snippets of recorded colloquial dialogue.

> 'Hi, it's Steve Sargent calling on behalf of the American Veterans Honor Fund. Are you ready for active duty? (*laughs*) I'm only kidding.'

> 'The drive supports legislators whose goals are to keep our communities safer, as well as support assistance to the families of first responders and police officers killed in the line of duty. So I just wanted to reach out and make sure they can count on you.'

Tugging Hearts to Raise $89 Million, but Giving Scant 1% to the Causes

From Page A1

organize the nonprofits, the people said, then billed them — through shell companies that obscured the connection.

The campaign-finance system is built to police who puts money into politics, legal experts say. These groups embodied a flaw: The system is poorly prepared to stop those who raise money and channel it somewhere other than candidates and causes.

By minimizing their aid to candidates, the consultants who helped set up the five nonprofits avoided scrutiny from the Federal Election Commission and most state watchdogs, and put their groups under the jurisdiction of a distracted and underfunded regulator, the Internal Revenue Service. As a result, their spending records were posted not on the F.E.C.'s easily searchable site, but on a byzantine I.R.S. page written in bureaucratic jargon.

To understand what these groups did with their $89 million, The Times analyzed 15,851 pages of their financial reports, including 135,843 separate expenditures, searched corporate records in 10 states and interviewed the nonprofits' leaders and vendors.

Four of the five nonprofits remain active. In statements, they said they had not sought to avoid oversight, enrich insiders or deceive donors.

Instead, the groups said, they simply believed in helping politicians indirectly — not by giving them money or buying them ads or mentioning their names, but by obliquely raising issues that could shift voters their way.

To that end, the groups said, even fund-raising calls from "Frank Wallace" were part of their mission. Since they mentioned policing — a topic voters might care about — the calls were not a means to an end in the work of influencing elections. They were the work itself.

"We have met, and in fact exceeded, in our mission to raise awareness of police issues, hold politicians accountable for



THE MARQUETTE TRIBUNE

John W. Connors founded Campaign Now while still a student at Marquette University.

shameful treatment of police officers, and activate grassroots supporters who demand change," said Simon Lewis, one of the three Wisconsin consultants who helped establish the groups and who serves as president of one of them, the National Police Support Fund.

Campaign-finance experts said that the groups' defense of their work — especially their arguments that the fund-raising calls were political activism in themselves — seemed to test the limits of what was allowed under law.

"Constructing an elaborate self-licking ice cream cone, or fund-raising cycle that feeds itself, that's not an exempt purpose," said Matthew Sanderson, a lawyer at the firm Caplin & Drysdale who has advised Republican campaigns, using the I.R.S. term for an allowable use of the groups' money. "The fund-raising has to be *for* something."

A lawyer for the active groups, Craig Engle, said all four had faced "tax exempt compliance examinations" by the I.R.S. that began in the spring of 2022. Mr. Engle said that an I.R.S. representative had told him in a phone conversation Friday that the groups would face no penalties, but that the service had not yet issued a decision in writing. Another lawyer for the nonprofits said the I.R.S. had told the groups they could continue "to operate as-is."

The I.R.S. declined to comment about the groups, citing taxpayer-privacy rules.

In their calls, the groups identified themselves to potential donors as political organizations. Beyond that, they were often vague about whom they supported and how. The American Police Officers Alliance told donors it was "supporting efforts to elect lawmakers to advocate for those who protect our nation's citizens."

Ryan Meyer, who was president of the American Police Officers Alliance from 2017 to 2021, said the three Wisconsin consultants used him as a figurehead and ousted him after he learned that most of the money raised by the group went back into more fund-raising and demanded changes in the organization's direction.

"It made me sick to my stomach," Mr. Meyer said. "We're misleading people who have given hard-earned money."

Hidden Connections

On paper, the nonprofits are not connected to one another. In public filings, they list separate boards of directors and separate offices in Washington's Virginia suburbs.

The Times found their connections — to each other, and to the three Wisconsin consultants — by following their money through a web of shell companies and corporate aliases.

The Times's analysis showed that the five nonprofits had paid a combined $985,000 to a company in Baltimore called Voter Mobilization LLC. It was registered in Delaware — where corporate-secrecy laws meant its owners did not have to be disclosed.

In reality, the Baltimore address was just a virtual office, where the company received mail but kept no staff. Voter Mobilization LLC was actually owned by an obscure political firm called Campaign Now, which was in turn owned by a 37-year-old Republican consultant from Wisconsin named John W. Connors, a central figure who appears to connect all five nonprofits.

Tax records show that the five groups paid $1.1 million to companies where Mr. Connors was either the owner or a partner. The payments were part of a pattern in which the nonprofits paid firms connected to the three consultants for "political support services" and other tasks like bookkeeping and consulting.

"I do this to help people without a voice organize, raise money and design a platform," Mr. Connors said in a statement. He confirmed his company's ownership of Voter Mobilization LLC. "Yes I am paid for what I do (everybody is) but my real compensation is the satisfaction of Americans getting involved in the system," he said.

In another instance, the nonprofit groups said they had paid six different vendors spread across Illinois, Pennsylvania, Colorado, Nevada, Texas and Tennessee. But corporate records showed a common thread: All of those companies were actually aliases for — or a subsidiary of — a single Wisconsin firm owned by Kyle Maichle, another of the consultants behind the nonprofits.

Mr. Maichle, 40, was a researcher for Mr. Connors in 2011 and 2012. In 2017, with Mr. Connors's help, Mr. Maichle started his own company, Precision Compliance Consulting. The nonprofits paid Mr. Maichle's companies about $876,000.

"I created the trade names to protect my newly formed companies in a radicalized political environment," Mr. Maichle said in an email.

The analysis by The Times also found about $839,000 in payments from the nonprofits to other companies owned by Mr. Lewis, the third consultant and another former employee of Mr. Connors.

A captain in the Wisconsin Army National Guard's military police, Mr. Lewis, 37, embodies how these groups and their vendors are intertwined: He is president of one nonprofit group, the National Police Support Fund, was an officer of another and has been a vendor to all five.

He also illustrates the secrecy that shrouded those connections. The National Police Support Fund repeatedly told the I.R.S. it had not engaged in business transactions with any board members — even as it did so with him. In one case, the filing attesting that there had not been insider transactions was signed by Mr. Lewis himself, as president.

"This appears to be a scrivener's error on the part of the accountant. This happens," the National Police Support Fund said in a statement.

'Boss Man'

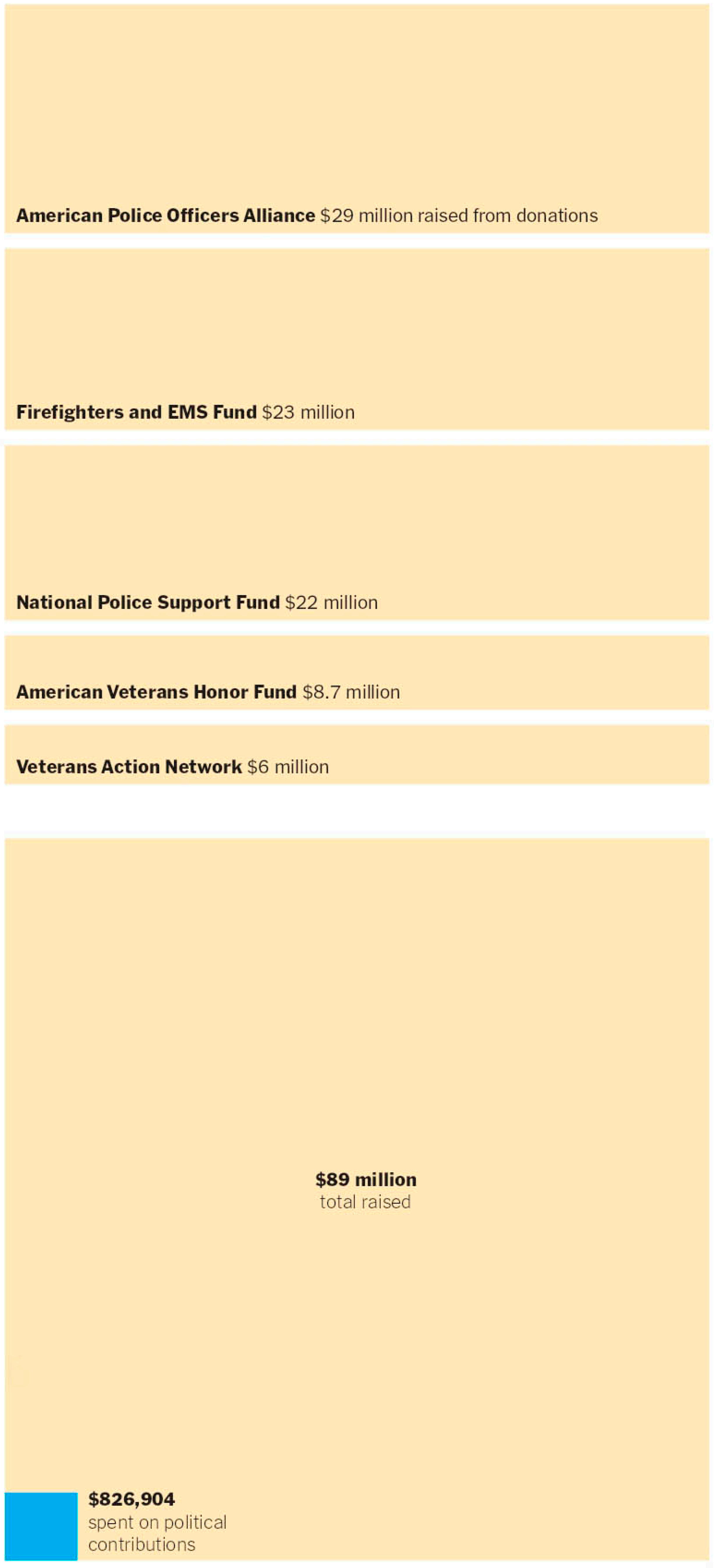
Mr. Connors, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Maichle were all active in college conservative politics in Wisconsin about 15 years ago, when Mr. Connors was the leader of campus Republicans at Marquette University.

Mr. Connors founded Campaign Now before he graduated, and built it into a firm that handled robocalls and voter

Camille Baker, Julie Tate and Seamus Hughes contributed reporting.

Where Did the Money Go? Mainly to More Fund-Raising

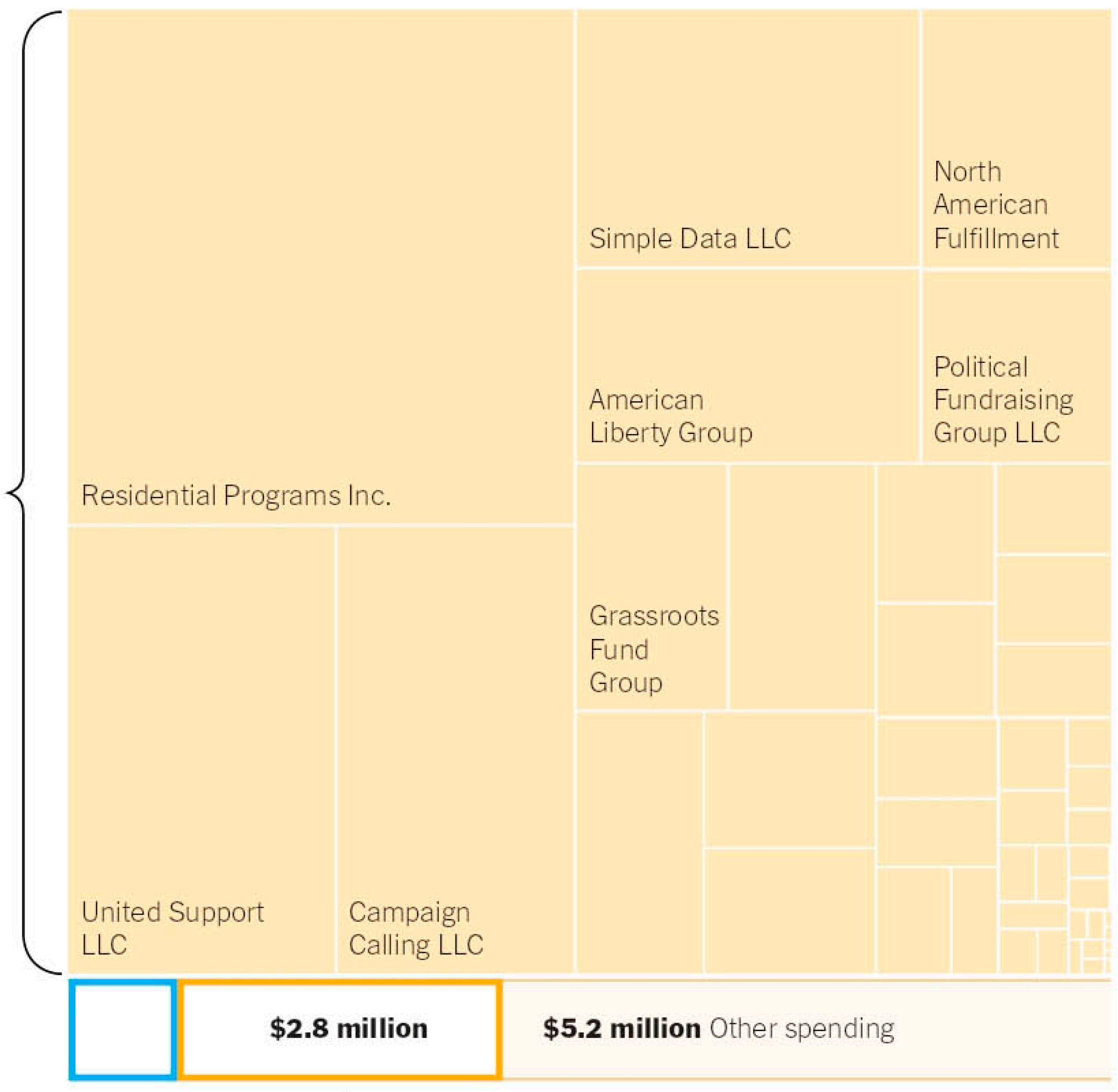
A group of conservative operatives — targeting donors with sophisticated robocalls — raised millions, ostensibly to help pro-police and pro-veteran candidates. Instead, a New York Times analysis shows, nearly all the money went to pay the callers — and themselves.



Through fund-raising calls claiming to help the police, firefighters or veterans, these five groups have raised **$89 million** from small-dollar donors since 2014.

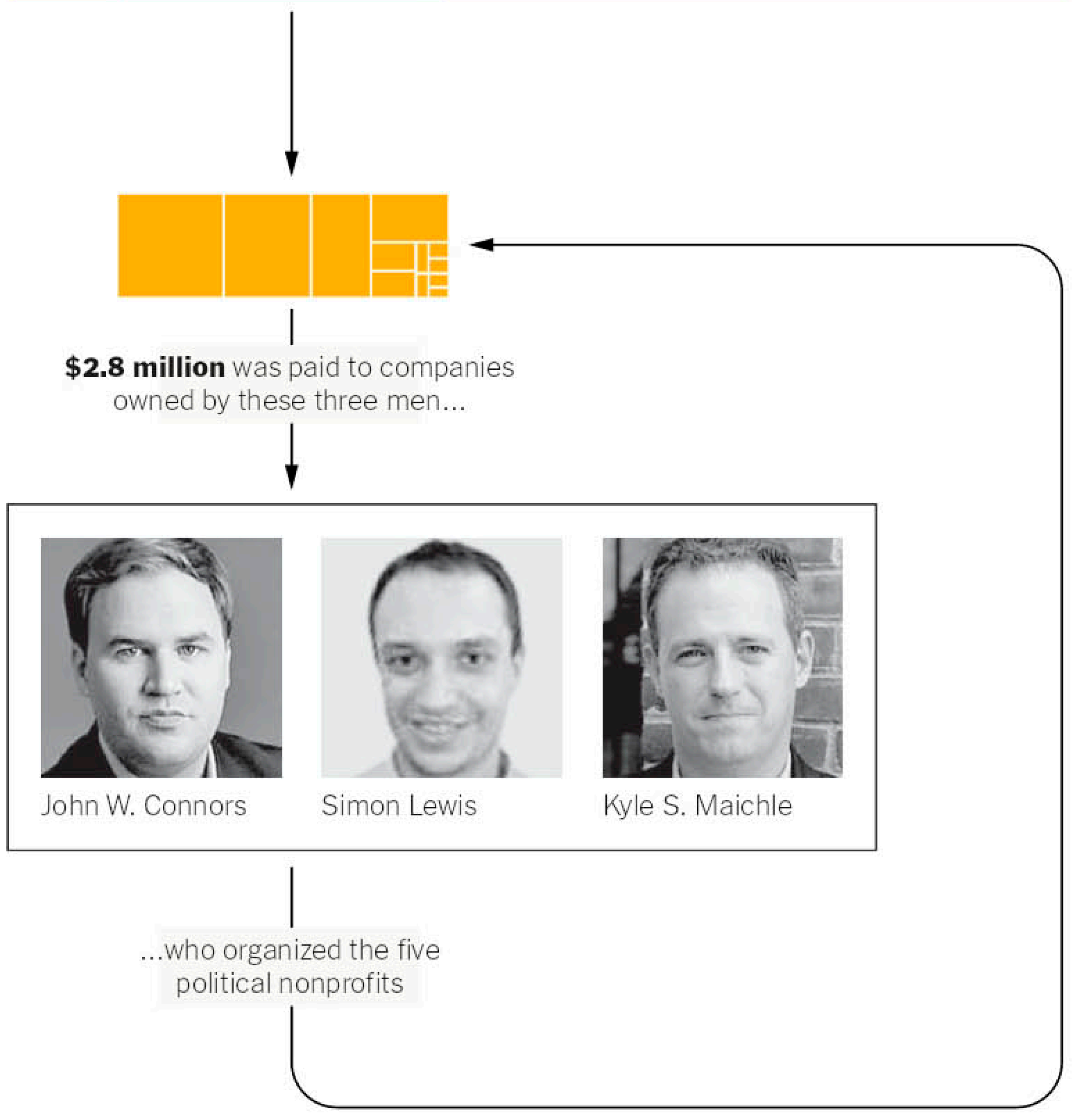
Only one percent of the money they raised — **$826,904** — was used to help candidates, via donations, ads, or targeted get-out-the-vote messages, according to a New York Times analysis of the groups' public filings.

$80 million Fund-raising



$80 million — about 90 percent of the money the groups raised — was sent back to their fund-raising contractors to feed a self-consuming loop where donors paid to find more donors. Along the way, this small group of nonprofits became one of America's biggest sources of robocalls.

The groups also paid another **$2.8 million** to three Republican political consultants from Wisconsin who were the hidden force behind all five nonprofits, according to people who worked for the groups.



Those three helped organize the nonprofits, the people said, then billed them — through shell companies that obscured the connection.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

> ‘Oh, there you are. I was beginning to think everyone was ignoring me like my wife and kids do.’

> ‘You know, tragically, 17 U.S. veterans commit suicide every day, and I don’t know if you knew but every night there are over 50,000 homeless veterans that are struggling on our streets.’

Thousands of Small Payments Obscured Where the Money Went

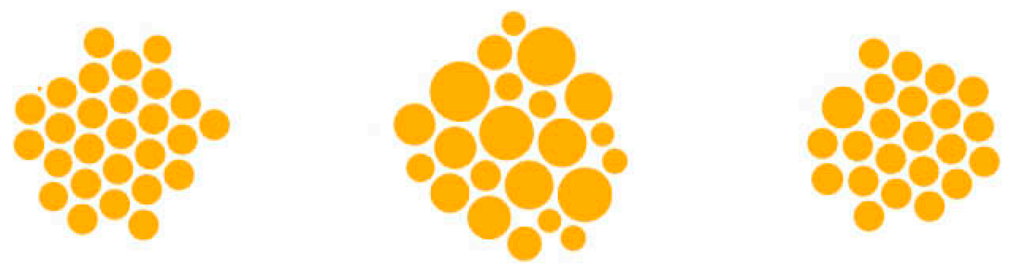
The nonprofits often broke their transactions out into payments as small as $1. For 2021, that would require wading through 1,919 pages of filings for the Firefighters and EMS Fund.

Each circle represents one payment reported by the Firefighters and EMS Fund in 2021. The bigger the circle, the bigger the payment.

• $100 ● $5,000

The Firefighters and EMS Fund reported no political contributions in 2021.

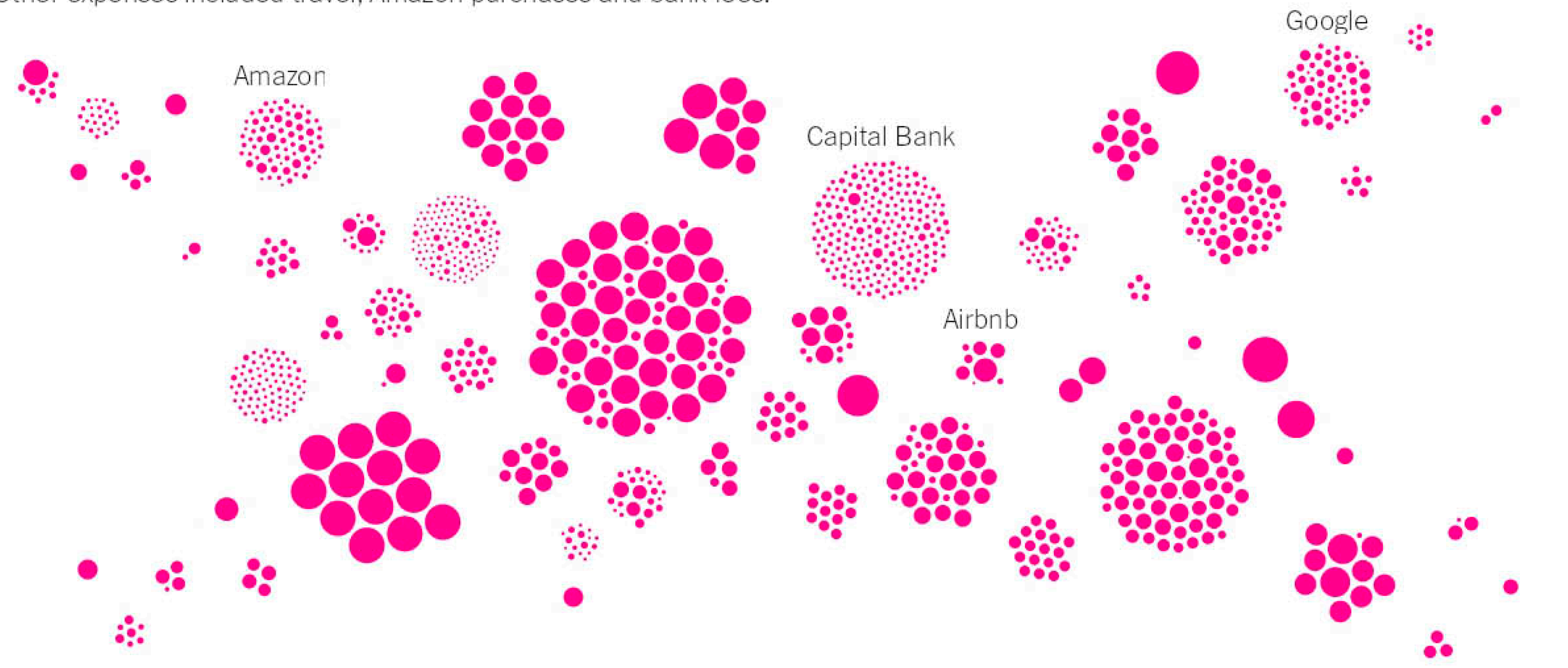
It paid **$157,000** to companies owned by PAC insiders.



Most of the money — **more than $4.4 million** — went to fund-raising companies via tens of thousands of small payments.



Other expenses included travel, Amazon purchases and bank fees.



THE NEW YORK TIMES

> **‘I’m pretty upset. I think they owe people the money back.’**
>
> LOUISE McCONKEY, 72, a retiree in Puyallup, Wash., who has made 35 donations.

outreach. He hired Mr. Lewis and Mr. Maichle, but made clear who was in charge: the firm’s website gave his title as “Boss Man.”

In 2015, Mr. Connors’s company appeared to land a new lucrative client: Veterans Action Network. It was a 527 group, which meant it could take donations, but not offer donors a charitable deduction. It paid Mr. Connors’s company for strategy consulting.

At one point, Mr. Connors appeared to acknowledge that in the veterans group his company had in effect created its own client, the first of the five nonprofits that the three men would have a hand in establishing.

“Group was started by Simon Lewis on my team and he assembled the board of directors,” Mr. Connors wrote in an email message to Paul Brown, whom Mr. Connors was recruiting to serve as the nonprofit’s executive director. In that email, Mr. Connors talked about the nonprofit as “we:” “We would start you out in an Executive Director [or] VP type role with aim to put you in a formal President role if it works out.”

“It all went through John and Simon,” said Mr. Brown, who shared the email with The Times. He took the executive director job, then left after a couple of months, uncomfortable with the idea of raising money for the group.

“It was pretty much all spent on fund-raising,” Mr. Brown said.

Veterans Action Network’s disclosures show it raised $6.1 million before shutting down in 2019.

Of that, about $102,000 went to Campaign Now, the firm started by Mr. Connors, and another $112,000 to companies where Mr. Connors, Mr. Maichle or Mr. Lewis was either the owner or a partner, tax records show. Mr. Maichle left Campaign Now in 2012, and Mr. Lewis in 2016, to start their own firms.

Veterans Action Network also contracted extensively with other call centers and fund-raising consultants — with no apparent links to Mr. Connors and his associates — to solicit donations. Overall, The Times’s analysis found, Veterans Action Network spent about 92 percent of its donations on more fund-raising, a level that made it an outlier among its peers.

In the 2014, 2016 and 2018 election cycles, Veterans Action Network spent a higher percentage of the money it took in on fund-raising than any other large 527 group in the country, according to the campaign watchdog OpenSecrets. Most of the others spent far less, under 33 percent.

It was an outlier in another way, too. Every year, the I.R.S. asks 527 groups if they engaged in any “direct or indirect political campaign activities” to help candidates.

Many of its peers said yes, and listed hundreds of thousands of donations to state and local groups, or spending on issue ads that highlighted candidates’ positions.

But Veterans Action Network usually said no. The exception was 2018, when it said it had spent $1,000, a sliver of its revenue.

So if it was not active in politics, what was the point of Veterans Action Network?

The man who had been listed as the group’s treasurer, Patrick Stephan, said in a brief phone call that he did not know how the group spent its money, or why it had shut down. The man listed as its president, Dan Curran, did not respond to questions.

Mr. Connors, in an email to The Times, said he could not speak for the nonprofit. Contradicting his own earlier account of having been involved in the group’s founding, he said its leaders had chosen him — not the other way around.

“I believe that getting more citizens & voters engaged — helping them have a voice in the political and legislative process and being informed/engaged on issues is a good thing for our country,” Mr. Connors wrote. “We need more of it — not less.”

Four New Groups

The four new 527 groups started by people connected to Mr. Connors mimicked the methods employed by Veterans Action Network — with one improvement. The veterans group had used human callers to raise money. The new nonprofits used robocallers that sounded deceptively human, and could operate on a much wider scale.

The National Police Support Fund, where Mr. Lewis was president and Mr. Maichle the treasurer, used robocalls that opened with a joke about the caller’s wife.

The American Police Officers Alliance featured both the Midwestern-sounding “Frank Wallace” and “David,” with a thick New York accent. “David” said donors’ money would help elect pro-police legislators, and help the families of slain police officers. Mr. Maichle had filed the paperwork to incorporate that group, listing Mr. Lewis as an officer.

The American Veterans Honor Fund frequently opened calls with a joke but quickly pivoted to more somber topics, including veteran suicide and homelessness. A longtime friend and adviser to Mr. Connors was that group’s president, and Mr. Lewis filed its paperwork.

The fourth group, Firefighters and EMS Fund, talked about how deadly firefighters’ work is, and said its mission was to “support legislation that will save lives.” It asked for pledges of $30 or $50. Its president was formerly an intern at Campaign Now.

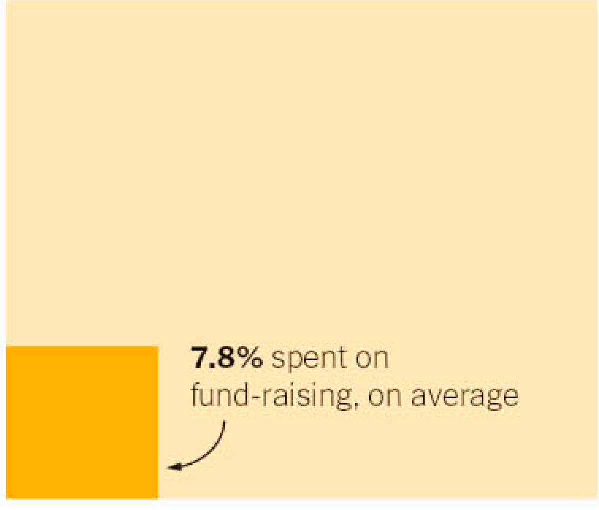
The organizations’ calls were recorded by Nomorobo, a company that collects robocalls so it can help customers block them. The company’s founder, Aaron Foss, said it had recorded tens of thousands of calls from just these four groups — putting them among the most prolific and longest-running robocallers his network has ever tracked.

The calls captured by Nomorobo were made using a powerful new technology, a “soundboard,” according to a spokesman for the groups’ largest vendor for fund-raising calls, the New Jersey-based Residential Programs Inc.

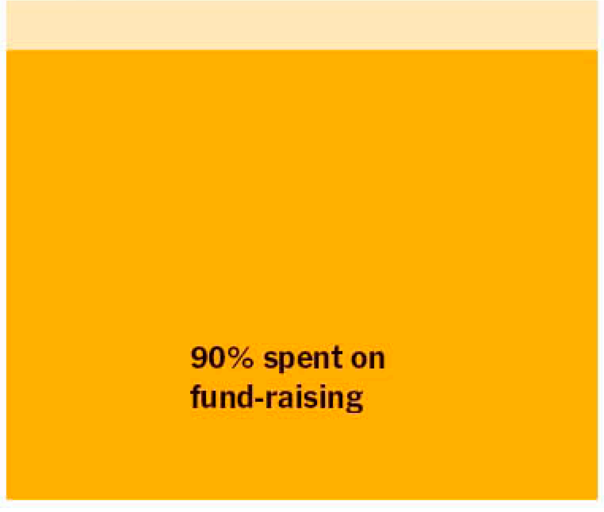
The five nonprofits were outliers in the way they spent their money

Similar nonprofits that spent money on fund-raising efforts allocated less than 8 percent of their total revenue to raising money, according to OpenSecrets.

Similar political nonprofits



Groups associated with Mr. Connors



Sources: OpenSecrets; New York Times analysis
Note: The average spending for similar political nonprofits is the average fund-raising expenditure in 2020 and 2021 for groups that were among the 527 companies that OpenSecrets analyzed that had more than $100,000 in total annual expenditures and spent more than $0 on fund-raising.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

A soundboard is a computer program, preloaded with snippets of recorded dialogue, down to uh-huhs, thank-yous and mother-in-law jokes. By clicking buttons, an operator anywhere in the world can “speak” to donors in colloquial English without saying a word.

“One, it keeps everybody on script. Two, you don’t hear the foreign accent. And three, you don’t hear the call center noise,” Mr. Foss said.

“If you say, ‘Are you a robot?’,” Mr. Foss said, “there’s a button that says, ‘No.’”

The calls worked. The groups have reported bringing in more than 18,000 donations. More than 92 percent were for amounts smaller than $200.

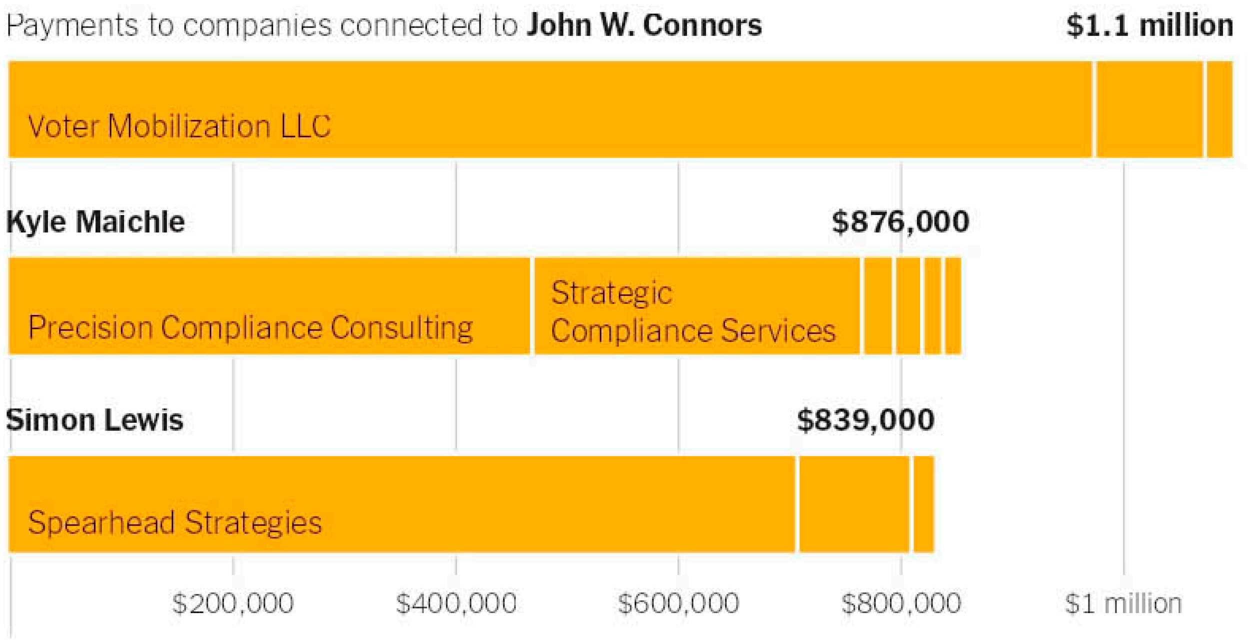
“They say this will help with fallen officers, and this will help in a political way with getting new uniforms for the firemen. But in a political way, not a direct way,” said Louise McConkey, 72, a retiree in Puyallup, Wash., who has made 35 donations to the five groups.

But Ms. McConkey said that her donations, totaling $3,650, left her with less to give to other causes she believes in, like St. Jude’s Cancer Research Hospital. She said she was surprised to learn how little

> ‘Big ones go out for $50 and the basic ones just $30, so can you try the big one — or is the basic one best for you this time?’

Companies connected to PAC insiders made millions

Five political nonprofits paid $2.8 million to companies owned by or connected to the three men who controlled the nonprofits themselves. Many of those payments were made through shell companies that disguised where the money was going.



THE NEW YORK TIMES

Tens of Millions Raised, But Little Goes to Causes

From Preceding Page

money went to directly supporting candidates.

"I'm pretty upset," she said. "I think they owe people the money back."

The Fate of $89 Million?

In the 2022 election cycle, OpenSecrets tracked 202 similarly large groups organized as 527s, and found that only 13 percent of them spent more than a third of their expenditures on fund-raising. Among them, the four connected to Mr. Connors and his associates ranked first, second, fourth and sixth in total fund-raising expenditures.

The groups' biggest contractor over the years, receiving $20 million, was Residential Programs, which has no known ties to Mr. Connors, Mr. Lewis or Mr. Maichle. Many of the other call centers they hired were hard to track. They did not respond to requests for comment, or were registered in states where their ownership and contact information were kept secret.

While the groups spent heavily on fund-raising, they also told the I.R.S. they had spent only small sums — or, sometimes, nothing at all — to help candidates get elected.

In the election year of 2020, for instance, the four active groups raised $20 million. But when they made their annual filings to the I.R.S., three of the groups answered "no" to the question asking if they had helped any candidates that year — either directly or indirectly.

The Firefighters and EMS Fund was the only one that said yes. It spent $23,300 to support a series of state and local ballot initiatives, like a property-tax levy to fund the fire department in the small Jerome Township, Ohio.

The groups avoided helping candidates on purpose, said Mr. Engle, a Washington lawyer they recently hired as a legal adviser. He said they made sure not to exceed $1,000 in direct aid to federal candidates — which could trigger a requirement to register with the F.E.C. — or to exceed state-by-state thresholds that would trigger a requirement to register with state agencies. That left them regulated by the I.R.S., which monitors 527 groups that the others do not.

"Helping candidates directly is not always the best use of money. Candidates often have more than enough money," Mr. Engle said.

In recent years, the Justice Department has prosecuted a handful of people for running "scam PACs" — political action committees that diverted most of their donors' money to insiders and endless fund-raising.

"These are not scam PACs," Mr. Engle said of his clients, because, he said, they stuck to the letter of the law.

Tax law says only that the nonprofits must be "operated primarily" to influence the election of candidates, or the selection of unelected officials like Supreme Court justices.

Several campaign-finance experts said that was a loose limit, but that these nonprofits still seemed to stretch it.

"Indirect expenses have to support direct expenses," said Ellen Aprill, a law professor at Loyola Marymount University who has studied 527 groups. "Why are you spending money fund-raising, if you don't have any candidate you're going to use it for?"

Kept in the Dark

In interviews, five former board members or staff members of the 527 groups said their spending patterns were hard to understand — even from the inside.

Mr. Meyer, the former president of the American Police Officers Alliance, said that after learning about his group's spending patterns he sought to bring about a change. "If we're going to run this thing, we're going to run it legit," he said, describing his feeling at the time. "We're not going to run it as a half-assed grift."

But he said he was removed from the board in 2021.

Matthew Gutmann, a friend of Mr. Meyer's, said Mr. Maichle had recruited him to be treasurer of the American Veterans Honor Fund.

"I was never in a board meeting. Not one bleeping second," Mr. Gutmann, who was treasurer from 2017 to 2020, said. "I was excluded from virtually everything, other than signing other documents, which I was given the impression were on the up-and-up."

Mr. Gutmann said he eventually learned how the group spent its money, and also concluded that Mr. Connors was actually in control. He said he, too, was ousted after raising questions.

Now, he said, he warns people to avoid phone solicitations. "I tell my folks, 'Do not donate over the phone,'" he said.

In statements, the American Police Officers Alliance and the American Veterans Honor Fund said that Mr. Meyer and Mr. Gutmann had been removed for policy violations, including for making "false statements to outside third parties that consultants run the organization."

The groups continue to raise money. Mr. Foss, of the firm Nomorobo, said his lines have recorded hundreds of calls this year alone. "Frank Wallace" is back with new dad jokes, and another plea for money.

How much?

"Whatever you think is fair for our heroes," the voice on the phone says.

> **'We're misleading people who have given hard-earned money.'**
> RYAN MEYER, who was president of the American Police Officers Alliance from 2017 to 2021.

> **'Helping candidates directly is not always the best use of money.'**
> CRAIG ENGLE, a lawyer for the active fund-raising groups.

Methodology

To learn how these groups used their donors' money, The Times built an electronic database of their expenditures, drawn from 15,851 pages of the groups' own public disclosures. That database contained 135,843 individual expenditures, paid to 424 vendors. To determine how much the groups have paid to the three Wisconsin men, The Times first used state corporate records to identify the owners of vendor companies. Using those records — and statements from Mr. Lewis, Mr. Maichle and Mr. Connors — The Times identified 13 vendors owned by one of the three. Together, the 527 groups paid those vendors a collective $2.8 million. To determine how much the 527 groups spent on fund-raising, The Times started with their own self-reporting. In annual filings with the I.R.S., the groups named their biggest fund-raisers — and routinely said they had paid fund-raisers more than 75 percent of what had come in from their donors. But the groups' self-reported totals did not include payments to companies that performed back-end tasks integral to fund-raising — like opening envelopes and taking out donors' checks, or processing credit-card donations. The Times counted payments to those vendors, too, and arrived at an estimate that the groups had spent 90 percent of their revenue on fund-raising. To calculate what the groups had spent to help or oppose candidates between 2014 and 2021, The Times generally relied on the groups' self-reported totals from their annual filings to the I.R.S. The exception was in 2021, when the Firefighters and EMS Fund reported spending $4.9 million. The Times could find no evidence of that spending in public records, however, and the Firefighters and EMS Fund did not provide any evidence in response to The Times's queries. The Times used $0 for that year. For 2022, no I.R.S. filings are yet available. The Times relied instead on the groups' self-reported assessments of their spending on get-out-the-vote efforts.

Pence Looks Toward '24 Run, Pitching Himself as a 'Classical' Conservative

Shunning Tactics Of Trump and Using Reagan's Playbook

*This article is by **Jonathan Swan, Maggie Haberman** and **Shane Goldmacher.***

Former Vice President Mike Pence is expected to soon declare a long-shot campaign for the White House against the president under whom he served, pitching himself as a "classical conservative" who would return the Republican Party to its pre-Trump roots, according to people close to Mr. Pence.

Mr. Pence is working to carve out space in the Republican primary field by appealing to evangelicals, adopting a hard-line position in support of a federal abortion ban, promoting free trade and pushing back against G.O.P. efforts to police big business on ideological grounds. He faces significant challenges, trails far behind in the polls and has made no effort to channel the populist energies overtaking the party.

In a sign his campaign will be announced in the coming weeks, a pro-Pence super PAC called Committed to America is being set up. A veteran Republican operative, Scott Reed, who ran Bob Dole's 1996 presidential campaign and was the longtime top political strategist for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, will lead the group alongside Jeb Hensarling, a close friend of Mr. Pence's who served with him in Congress.

Mr. Pence finds himself in the highly unusual position of being a former vice president trying to squeeze back into the national conversation. The political profile he built under former President Donald J. Trump was more supplicant than standard-bearer, at least until the rupture in their relationship on Jan. 6, 2021. He would begin far behind Mr. Trump and Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida in early national and state polls of 2024 Republican primary voters.

The Pence candidacy will focus heavily on winning over evangelical voters, especially in Iowa, where the super PAC is already preparing to organize all 99 counties. Iowa's caucuses are the first contests for Republican presidential contenders early next year.

"Iowa feels more like Indiana than any other state in the union," Mr. Pence, a former governor of Indiana, said in a recent interview. "It just feels like home."

On a recent call with reporters, Mr. Reed, who will help lead the pro-Pence super PAC, described the Iowa caucuses as the "defining event" of Mr. Pence's candidacy and foreshadowed an old-fashioned blitz of retail politics. "We're going to organize Iowa, all 99 counties, like we're running him for county sheriff," he said.

If Mr. Trump represents the populist New Right, Mr. Pence is preparing to run in the mold of Ronald Reagan. His team's improbable bet is that a "Reagan coalition" — composed of the Christian right, fiscal conservatives and national security hawks — can be reassembled within a party transformed by Mr. Trump.

"We have to resist the siren song of populism unmoored to conservative principles," Mr. Pence said in the interview.

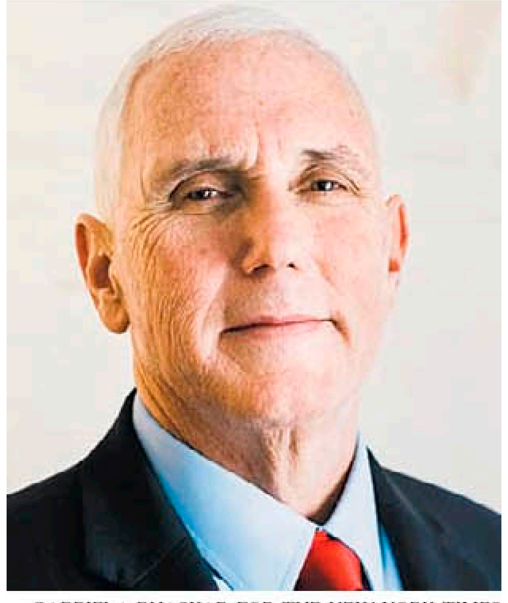
In a Tuesday night speech in New Hampshire focused on economics, Mr. Pence is expected to call for "free trade with free nations," according to a person familiar with the draft.

He is casting himself as a "Reagan conservative" and staking out sharply different positions from Mr. Trump and Mr. DeSantis on the most important policy questions framing the Republican 2024 race. Still, running against Mr. Trump so directly will force Mr. Pence to confront the contradictions inherent in having served as the president's yes-man for four years through the turmoil of the Trump administration.

"This campaign is going to reintroduce Mike Pence to the country as his own man," Mr. Reed said. "People know Mike Pence. They just don't know him well."

It remains to be seen how frequently Mr. Pence will discuss the moment that has defined him for the last two years: his rejection on Jan. 6 of Mr. Trump's pressure campaign to get him to exceed his constitutional authority while President Biden's Electoral College victory was certified.

That issue is not a winning one with the base of the G.O.P. But Mr. Pence's team believes there are enough Republicans who might be won over by Mr. Pence describing the moment as adhering to constitutional principles.


GABRIELA BHASKAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Mike Pence is expected to declare his candidacy soon.

Mr. Pence stands almost alone among the hopefuls in advocating views that were once standard issue for his party.

Case in point: Mr. Pence says Social Security and Medicare must be trimmed as part of any serious plan to deal with the national debt. Before Mr. Trump entered national politics in 2015, cutting entitlement programs was Republican orthodoxy. But Mr. Trump changed that. The former president has promised in his third campaign not to cut either program and he has attacked Mr. DeSantis on the issue.

"It is fairly remarkable that Joe Biden and Donald Trump have the same position on fiscal solvency: The position of never going to touch Social Security and Medicare," Mr. Pence said.

Mr. Pence said he would "explain to people" how the "debt crisis" would affect their children and grandchildren. He says his plan to cut benefits won't apply to Social Security and Medicare payments for people in retirement today or who will retire in the next 25 years. But he will pitch ideas to cut spending for people under 40.

Mr. Pence is also drawing a stark contrast on foreign policy. Both Mr. Trump and Mr. DeSantis have questioned whether the United States should be supporting Ukraine in its fight against Russia's invasion. Mr. Pence sees the battle as a modern version of the Cold War.

"There's a bit of a movement afoot in the Republican Party that would abandon our commitment to being the leader of the free world and that questions why we're providing military support in Ukraine," Mr. Pence said.

Unlike almost every major Republican running for president, Mr. Pence still defends former President George W. Bush's decisions to invade Afghanistan and Iraq, though he acknowledged the "weapons of mass destruction" intelligence Mr. Bush used to justify the Iraqi invasion was wrong.

After September 11th, the president articulated a doctrine that I wholly supported," Mr. Pence said, "which was that it's harder for your enemies to project force if they're running backward."

Mr. Pence is also resisting the anti-corporate furies dominating Republican politics, arguing limited government means not intervening in the private sector. He was one of the first major Republicans to criticize Mr. DeSantis for his fight against Disney.

In the view of New Right politicians such as Mr. DeSantis, limited-government conservatives are naïve to the fact that liberals have overtaken major American institutions — academia, Fortune 500 companies, the news media — and conservatives need to use governmental power to fight back.

Mr. Pence will run as a staunch social conservative. In his town hall with CNN last week, Mr. Trump refused to say he would support a federal ban on abortion.

Mr. Pence unapologetically endorses a national ban on abortion.

"For the former president and others who aspire to the highest office in the land to relegate that issue to states-only I think is wrong," Mr. Pence said. His senior adviser, Marc Short, said Mr. Pence regarded a 15-week national ban as a "minimal threshold" and would support federal efforts to "protect life beginning at conception."

There is little chance Mr. Pence will receive many endorsements from members of Congress. His team insists that Mr. Pence does not need elected officials to vouch for his credentials. Yet, it's also unclear how many Republican donors will back his bid. An early sign of interest came last week in Dallas when the billionaire Ross Perot Jr., a real estate developer and son of the former presidential candidate, hosted a lunch for Mr. Pence with other major donors, according to two people with direct knowledge of the gathering.

Among the hires for the super PAC supporting Mr. Pence is Bobby Saparow, who led the ground game for Gov. Brian Kemp's successful re-election campaign in Georgia in 2022, one of the few brights spots for Republicans in the midterms. Mr. Saparow promised to "replicate" the effort with Mr. Pence.

For now, Mr. Pence is signaling he's willing to do without a staple of Republican campaigns in the modern era: Mr. Trump's smashmouth politics and constant warfare against the media.

"People want to see us get back to having a threshold of civility in the public debate," Mr. Pence said. "And when I say that, when I tell people that I think democracy depends on heavy doses of civility, I get a very visceral response from crowds."

How Election Denial Hurt G.O.P. in 2022

By NICK CORASANITI

Denying the results of the 2020 election and casting doubts about the nation's voting system cost statewide Republican candidates 2.3 to 3.7 percentage points in the midterms last year, according to a new study from States United Action, a nonpartisan group that promotes fair elections.

Why it matters: Consequential races were close.

Even at the lowest end of the spectrum, 2.3 percentage points would have been enough to swing several critical midterm races that Republicans lost, including the contests for governor and attorney general in Arizona and the Senate elections in Nevada and Georgia.

In each of those races, the Republican nominee had either expressed doubts about the 2020 election or outright rejected its legitimacy.

And as former President Donald J. Trump illustrated at a town-hall event last week, election denialism is very much alive within the Republican Party.

But spreading such conspiracy theories again could hamper Republicans as they look to take back the Senate in 2024.

"The problem for a lot of Republicans right now is that the gap between what the base wants and what swing voters will tolerate has gotten very long," said Sarah Longwell, an anti-Trump Republican strategist.

Background: A series of losses for election deniers

In the midterms, a slate of election-denying candidates ran together as the America First coalition. These candidates, organized in part by Jim Marchant, the Republican nominee for secretary of state in Nevada, sought to take over critical parts of the election infrastructure by running for secretary of state, attorney general and governor in states across the country.


Kari Lake, who lost the Arizona governor's race last year, may be considering a Senate run.

But in every major battleground state, these candidates lost.

"What we found was lying about elections isn't just bad for our democracy, it's bad politics," said Joanna Lydgate, the chief executive of States United Action.

The group arrived at the 2.3 to 3.7 percentage-point "penalty" number by comparing election-denying candidates in 2022 with Republicans who did not espouse similar views, and then comparing the 2022 performance to that of 2018.

On the whole, 2022 was a better year for Republicans than 2018 was. As expected, in statewide races with no election denier, Republicans did much better in 2022 than in 2018 on average, but the same did not hold true for election-denying candidates.

What's next: Big Senate races in 2024

Several candidates who were a core part of the election denial movement have signaled an intent to run again in 2024, including Mr. Marchant in Nevada. Others, including Kari Lake and Doug Mastriano, who lost races for governor in Arizona and Pennsylvania, are reportedly considering bids for Senate.

And as Mr. Trump continues to demand fealty to such beliefs and hold sway over Republican primaries, the issue is likely to linger in G.O.P. politics.

Most battleground states are not holding contests for governor and secretary of state until 2026, but several marquee Senate races next year will determine control of the chamber.

"What's really interesting is that the results there are different from the results for congressional races and state legislative races," Ms. Lydgate said. "We think that's because in these statewide races for governor, state attorney general, secretary of state, voters really came to understand that those are the people who oversee voting. Those are the people who are in charge of your freedom to vote."

President Promotes High-Quality Careers Minus College Degree

From Page A1

are now more likely to identify as Democrats, while those without college degrees are more likely to support Republicans.

That increasingly clear split has enormous implications for Mr. Biden as he tries to expand the coalition of voters that sent him to the White House in the first place. In 2020, Mr. Biden won 61 percent of college graduates, but only 45 percent of voters without a four-year college degree — and just 33 percent of white voters without a four-year degree.

"The Democratic Party has become a cosmopolitan, college-educated party even though it's a party that considers itself a party of working people," said David Axelrod, a top adviser to former President Barack Obama.

Mr. Axelrod added that the perception that Wall Street had been bailed out during the 2008 recession while the middle class was left to struggle deepened the fissure between Democrats and blue-collar workers who did not attend college.

The election of Donald J. Trump, who harnessed many of those grievances for political gain, solidified the trend.

"There's a sense among working-class voters, and not just white working-class voters, that the party doesn't relate to them or looks down on people who work with their hands or work with their backs or do things that don't require college education," Mr. Axelrod said.

Now, in speeches around the country, Mr. Biden rarely speaks about his signature piece of legislation, a $1 trillion infrastructure bill, without also emphasizing that it will lead to trade apprenticeships and, ultimately, union jobs.

"Let's offer every American a path to a good career whether they go to college or not, like the path you started here," Mr. Biden said at the trades institute, referring to its apprenticeship program.

The White House says apprenticeship programs, which typically combine some classroom learning with paid on-the-job experience, are crucial to overcoming a tight labor market and ensuring that there is a sufficient work force to turn the president's sprawling spending plan into roads, bridges and electric vehicle chargers.

Mr. Biden has offered incentives for creating apprenticeships, with hundreds of millions of dollars in federal grants for states that expand such programs.

"Biden is the first president that's reducing the need to get a college degree since World War II," said Douglas Brinkley, a presidential historian.

Mr. Biden's approach is a shift from previous Democratic administrations, which were far more focused on college as a path to higher pay and advancement. Mr. Obama, during his first joint session of Congress, said that the United States should "once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world."

Mr. Obama's wife, Michelle Obama, started a campaign encouraging Americans to go to college, at one point suggesting in a satirical video that life without higher education was akin to watching painting dry.

Democrats have long walked a careful line on the issue. Mr. Biden has been a champion of higher education, particularly community colleges, and one of his most ambitious proposals as president was a $400 billion program to forgive up to $20,000 in student loan debt for individuals who earn under $125,000 a year. Republicans have portrayed that proposal as a giveaway for elites.

Mitch Landrieu, the president's infrastructure coordinator, said Mr. Biden had always believed college was important, but "it is absolutely not the only way to build an economy."

"He sees that men and women like that have been left behind for a long time," Mr. Landrieu said of people without college degrees. "They've always been part of the Democratic Party. It's not until recently that's changed."

The shift coincides with a stark political reality.

The battleground states that voted for the winning candidate in both 2016 and 2020 rank roughly in the middle on higher-education levels, which means that Mr. Biden's effort to appeal to those without a degree could make a real difference in 2024, according to Doug Sosnik, a former senior adviser to President Bill Clinton.

"You need to both try to mitigate losses with noncollege voters and at the same time try to exploit the advantage in those states with educated voters," Mr. Sosnik said. "You can't rely on the diploma divide solely to win. But it's part of the formula."

A similar dynamic is playing out nationwide.

Gov. Josh Shapiro, Democrat of Pennsylvania, released campaign ads focused on expanding apprenticeships and removing requirements for college degrees for thousands of state government jobs — a pledge he made good on when he entered office. Republicans in Maryland, Alaska and Utah have removed similar degree requirements.

Gov. Spencer Cox, Republican of Utah, said he was not only hoping to address a stigma attached to those who do not attend college but also appease employers increasingly anxious about persistent worker shortages.

"We can't do any of this stuff if we don't have a labor force," Mr. Cox said.

Christopher Montague, 29, an Air Force veteran from the Philadelphia suburbs, who trained as an apprentice in drywall instead of going to college, said he had noticed an "awakening" by politicians on the upside of pursuing training in trades.

"There is money in working with your hands," he said.

At the Finishing Trades Institute in Philadelphia, instructors say they have noticed an increase in demand. Drew Heverly, an industrial painting instructor, said he typically had 10 apprentices working on construction projects in "a good year."

This year, he has already sent nearly 40 apprentices to work on projects in Philadelphia that are partially funded by Mr. Biden's infrastructure package.

"We've definitely seen the ramp-up and the need for manpower," Mr. Heverly said.

The prospect of pursuing an education in trade while earning money on projects has also gained momentum among high school students, according to the Finishing Trades Institute's recruitment coordinator, Tureka Dixon. Community colleges in the area are even reaching out to see if they can form joint partnerships to train students on trade.

"Whether it's cranes, high-rise buildings, bridges, that is trade work," Ms. Dixon said as the apprentices in hard hats listened to a lesson on lead removals. "That is physical labor. That is the country, so I think people need to consider it more."

Mark Smith, 30, who is training as an apprentice at the institute, said learning a trade was not a fallback position for him — it was his preferred career.

"School wasn't for me," Mr. Smith said. "I did the Marine Corps and then I started right in this. For me it was a waste of money."

Mr. Wissman, who has never voted in a presidential election and identifies as an independent, said he was not sure yet if the recognition from the White House would move him to finally vote in the 2024 election.

"I want in office whoever is going to help me put food on my table," said Mr. Wissman, whose girlfriend is pregnant with their second child. "At the end of the day, that's all it's going to come down to."



PHOTOGRAPHS BY RACHEL WISNIEWSKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

"In my 31 years, it was always, 'You gotta go to college if you want a job,'" said Tyler Wissman, above, third from left, in training at the Finishing Trades Institute in Philadelphia. Below right, safety training at the institute, where President Biden spoke in March.





Philadelphia Democrats Face Primary For Mayor

By KATIE GLUECK

Amid grave concerns about public safety, education and the direction of a major American city, Philadelphians will take a major step on Tuesday toward electing their 100th mayor in a contest with implications that will reverberate across a crucial presidential battleground.

The winner of Tuesday's Democratic primary is all but certain to become the mayor of Philadelphia — the largest city in Pennsylvania, a premier presidential swing state — and the spending on the race has reflected those stakes. The crowded and increasingly acrimonious mayoral contest is the most expensive in the city's history, according to The Philadelphia Inquirer.

Five contenders are generally considered to be the leading Democratic candidates: the former City Council members Helen Gym, Cherelle Parker and Allan Domb; Rebecca Rhynhart, a former city controller; and Jeff Brown, who has owned grocery stores.

Ms. Parker, Ms. Rhynhart and Ms. Gym are often regarded as in the strongest positions, but the race is fluid and highly competitive. Sparse polling shows that there are many undecided voters, and some Democrats worry about low turnout, factors that make the outcome difficult to predict.

Here are five things to know about Tuesday's primary.

It's a test — however imperfect — of progressive power.

Nearly two years ago, left-wing Democrats were bitterly disappointed by New York, as the relatively moderate Eric Adams swept into Gracie Mansion on a message of law and order.

But since then, mayoral candidates identified with the more liberal wing of the party have notched other notable victories, including Michelle Wu in Boston and Karen Bass in Los Angeles. Last month, Brandon Johnson, a left-leaning Chicagoan, electrified progressive Democrats across the country with his mayoral win.

The Philadelphia mayor's race offers the next significant, if imperfect, citywide test of progressive power. Some of the same players who engaged in other key races — including Senator Bernie Sanders and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, teachers' union activists and organizations like the Working Families Party — are backing Ms. Gym. Mr. Johnson endorsed her on Friday.

She is a veteran community organizer focused in particular on schools, who is pledging to deliver "transformative" change.

"My opponents think my plans are too big," she said in an ad. "I think their ideas are too small."

Mr. Sanders and Ms. Ocasio-Cortez are expected to rally with her on Sunday. In an interview, Mr. Sanders sought to connect the candidacies of Mr. Johnson, Ms. Bass and Ms. Gym.

"What Karen and Brandon and hopefully Helen will be able to do," said Mr. Sanders, who is himself the former mayor of Burlington, Vt., "is say, 'You know what? This government, our governments, are working for you, not just wealthy campaign contributors.'"

A low turnout or a slim margin of victory in any direction could make it challenging to draw sweeping conclusions about the mood of the city, but many observers see Ms. Gym's candidacy as a notable test for the left.

"If Helen wins, that's a big story, because it means the progressive movement won," said former Gov. Ed Rendell, a former Philadelphia mayor who is supporting Ms. Rhynhart.

Philadelphia could elect its first female mayor.

Philadelphia's mayors to date have at least one thing in common: They have all been men.

"Let's just say I'll bring a different touch," Ms. Parker, a former state representative, says in a campaign ad that highlights images of some of those who would be her predecessors.

Ms. Parker, who has advocated for a more robust police presence while stressing her opposition to police abuse, has often used her identity as a mother of a young Black man to argue that she can strike the appropriate balance on matters of public safety.

"I am a Black woman who has lived my real life at the intersection of race and gender," said Ms. Parker, who has the support of much of the party establishment, in an interview. "I know what it feels like to be marginalized."

And Ms. Gym, who could also be the city's first Asian American mayor, has branded herself a "tough Philly mom" — but she made it clear that the history-making potential of her candidacy was part of a much broader argument.

"It is really important that change is more than just a change of faces," Ms. Gym said. "People want a transformation of how people live."

Ms. Rhynhart, who is running on her government experience while promising to take on the status quo as a critic of the current mayor, took a similar tack.

"There's been 99 male mayors," she said. "It's an important time, and likely long overdue, to have a woman as the leader of our city. But I'm focused on being the best overall leader."

The city's self-image is also at stake.

No one doubts the pride many Philadelphians feel in their city, the birthplace of the nation's democracy and the home of aggressively devoted sports fans.

But several current and former city leaders said the city's challenges with issues surrounding crime, education and other post-pandemic concerns had taken a significant toll on morale.

Philadelphians, said State Representative Malcolm Kenyatta, are looking for someone "who can sort of bring the city back — I think almost in an emotional way."

The current mayor, Jim Kenney, made headlines last year for declaring that he would "be happy" when he was done being mayor, comments he later sought to walk back.

"The mood in the city is despair — a lot of people have given up," Mr. Rendell said. "For a lot of people, it is the last chance to turn it around."

Mr. Rendell was elected mayor in 1991, at a moment of crisis for the city. Mr. Domb drew parallels between that race and the current moment.

"This is a turning-point election," he said.

The next mayor could be a prominent player in the 2024 presidential election.

When President Biden wants to project patriotism, talk about the future of American democracy or just count on a warm reception, he often heads to Philadelphia, a city he knows well as a former senator from nearby Delaware.

There will be a natural opening for Philadelphia's next Democratic mayor to serve as a party surrogate as Mr. Biden seeks re-election. Philadelphia's lower turnout rates have also disappointed Democrats in recent federal elections, and a number of candidates pledged in interviews to focus on turnout and voter access as mayor.

The success or failure of the next mayor to manage the city may be noticed by Republicans, said Representative Brendan Boyle, a Pennsylvania Democrat who supports Ms. Parker.

"If we have a Democratic mayor in Philadelphia who is not doing well or is unpopular, that does make winning in the Philadelphia metro area more challenging," he said. "That's something Republicans would certainly use statewide."

Public safety is the dominant issue.

On Monday, a canvasser working with a progressive political organization was fatally shot after a dispute with another canvasser with the group — a stunning moment that underscored how problems of gun violence are shaping the city, and the mayoral race.

"Public safety is virtually everyone's No. 1 issue," said former Mayor Michael Nutter, who backs Ms. Rhynhart.

While the full crime picture in Philadelphia is complex, leading candidates have made it clear that they see it as the biggest force in the contest and have moved assertively to address it in advertising.

Some who once opposed an increase in police funding after the killing of George Floyd have struck starkly different tones in discussing law enforcement this primary contest, and there is broad agreement across the ideological spectrum on the need to fill police vacancies, while candidates also denounce police abuse.

Certainly, there are notable distinctions in emphasis and policy, too. Mr. Brown has been endorsed by Philadelphia's police union.

"The most urgent concern is crime, and especially violent crimes," he said. "Philadelphia really isn't doing well."

Candidates differ about how to balance investments in social services with those in law enforcement, and some have clashed over police stops of citizens.

"We can't go backwards to racist, unconstitutional practices," Ms. Rhynhart said. "But we can't have the current chaos."







PHOTOGRAPHS BY RACHEL WISNIEWSKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

From left: Helen Gym, Rebecca Rhynhart and Jeff Brown are among the candidates vying to be the next mayor of Philadelphia. The winner of the primary is all but certain to become the city's 100th mayor. The race is fluid and highly competitive, and the result could have implications for the 2024 presidential election.

City Fines Mayor's Team For Violating Finance Rules

By DANA RUBINSTEIN

Mayor Eric Adams's mayoral transition committee was fined $19,600 on Monday for violating New York City's campaign finance rules — the first time in the city's history that the Campaign Finance Board has levied a financial penalty on a mayoral transition committee.

Mr. Adams's 2021 "transition and inauguration entity" was cited for improperly accepting five donations from individuals doing business with the city, for failing to properly wind down the committee by its April 30 deadline, and for failing to respond in a timely fashion to the board's request for information and documents.

Transition committees are used to fund inauguration activities and to help elected officials develop their agenda and team.

Asked for comment, Evan Thies, a spokesman for the Adams transition team, noted that the board fined former Mayor Bill de Blasio's 2013 mayoral campaign (not his transition committee) $48,000 for campaign finance infractions.

Mr. Thies likened the fines levied against the Adams transition committee to "just late fees for responding appropriately to the Campaign Finance Board."

The board had a different view, particularly concerning the $14,400 fine it leveled at the committee for failing to hand over documents the board had requested. The committee only submitted some of the requested documents last October, five months after the original request, and only after the board had issued it a "penalty notice."

"When committees fail to provide information or documents requested by the board, or provide them very late in the audit process, they obstruct our ability to conduct the regular audit reviews, prevent the staff from finding or resolving discrepancies, and deprive the public of information about its financial activity," said Eric Friedman, the board's assistant executive director for public affairs. "As such, significant penalties are generally assessed for these violations."

The board, which is designed to limit "the role and influence of private money in the political process," began conducting enforcement against transition committees after the 2013 election.

To avoid conflicts of interest, candidates in New York City are forbidden from accepting donations from any individual listed in a database of people doing business with the city.

Mr. Adams's transition accepted five such donations, including $5,000 from Domenic Monopoli, the owner of a Brooklyn carting company, and $5,100 from Joseph Moinian, the chief executive of the Moinian Group, a major real estate firm.

The committee refunded the donations more than 20 days after the board notified it of the issue, the board said. For failing to exercise adequate due diligence, the committee was fined $5,000.

For failing to wind down the committee in a timely manner, once the transition was complete, the committee was fined $200.

The biggest fine by far was levied for the committee's failure to submit documents to the board, only partially doing so after the board had asked for them.

A year ago on May 16, the board asked the committee for a raft of documents and gave the committee until June 7 to comply. The committee did not respond. The board reiterated its request on June 22 and July 19. The committee again did not respond. Only after the board sent a penalty notice did the committee act.

The board found its disclosures insufficient. The committee's bank statements, for example, showed more than $120,000 in donations that went unreported to the Campaign Finance Board; conversely, the committee reported more than $56,000 in donations that do not appear in its bank statements. The committee also said it issued nearly $240,000 in refunds for which it provided inadequate documentation. Those issues remain outstanding.

Representatives for the Adams committee declined to appear at Monday's hearing. But at a hearing on the infractions in March, Mr. Adams's lawyers argued that the penalties were excessive.

They also noted that the person in charge of managing the committee's finances was going through a legal separation that made it difficult for her to fulfill her professional duties.

At the March hearing, a board lawyer brushed away that defense.

"They certainly had ample funds at their disposal if they wanted to retain additional staff to ensure that they were in compliance," said the board's general counsel, Bethany Perskie.

Contours of a Possible Deal Emerge in Debt Limit Talks

By ZOLAN KANNO-YOUNGS and CATIE EDMONDSON



YURI GRIPAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Biden officials said they would not accept a deal that rolled back his signature policy achievements.

Still, the sides remain far apart, with a potential default looming in June.

WASHINGTON — President Biden and congressional leaders will resume face-to-face talks on Tuesday to avert a government default, with the White House expressing cautious optimism as the contours of a possible deal began to come into focus.

With time running out to strike a deal to raise the debt limit, broad areas of negotiation have emerged, including fixed caps on federal spending, reclaiming unspent funds designated for the Covid-19 emergency, stiffer work requirements for federal benefits and expedited permitting rules for energy projects.

"I remain optimistic because I'm a congenital optimist," Mr. Biden told reporters on Sunday in Rehoboth Beach, Del. He added, "I really think there's a desire on their part, as well as ours, to reach an agreement, and I think we'll be able to do it."

Still, on Monday, Speaker Kevin McCarthy reiterated that he believed little progress had been made, telling reporters that the two sides remained "far apart" even with a potential default looming. "We have no agreements on anything. That's why I'm so concerned," he added.

Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen reiterated on Monday that the United States could be unable to pay its bills by June 1 if it does not raise or suspend the debt limit, which caps how much money the country can borrow.

That $31.4 trillion limit was hit on Jan. 19, and the Treasury Department has been using accounting maneuvers to keep paying the government's bills. In a letter to lawmakers on Monday, Ms. Yellen cautioned that the actual date "could be a number of days or weeks later than these estimates" but she urged Congress to move quickly to prevent a default.

The Treasury Department has been using accounting maneuvers known as extraordinary measures to keep paying the country's bills without breaching the debt ceiling.

Republicans have said they want to cut federal spending before lifting the ceiling, but Mr. Biden has maintained that negotiating over cuts must not be a condition for raising the limit and avoiding what could be a catastrophic default.

Economists on Wall Street and in the White House say a prolonged default could obliterate jobs and lead the country into a recession.

Mr. Biden, who is set to depart on Wednesday for Japan to attend the Group of 7 meeting, confirmed on Monday that he would meet with Mr. McCarthy on Tuesday. The meeting will be at 3 p.m., according to the White House. Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the majority leader, was more optimistic than Mr. McCarthy on Monday, saying that the "parallel discussions" on federal spending and the debt ceiling were continuing in "a very serious way."

"We welcome a bipartisan debate about our nation's fiscal future," Mr. Schumer said. "But we've made it plain to our Republican colleagues that default is not an option. Its consequences are too damaging, too severe. It must be taken off the table."

The two sides had their first face-to-face meeting at the White House last Tuesday, but it ended without a deal. They had been set to meet again on Thursday, but that session was postponed to allow staff members more time to speak in detail.

People familiar with the negotiations cast the decision to postpone that meeting as a positive development, one that would give staff members more time to make progress.

"The conversations are constructive between all of the parties," said Wally Adeyemo, the deputy Treasury secretary.

"The United States has never defaulted on its debt, and we can't," Mr. Adeyemo said. "Because defaulting on our debt isn't just about financial markets. It's about paying our Social Security recipients. It's about paying our troops. It's about paying the men and women who are working the border today."

Biden administration officials have said they will not accept any deal that rolls back the president's signature legislative achievements, particularly on climate change. They want Republicans to drop certain provisions in the debt limit bill that passed the House last month.

That measure is dead on arrival in the Democratic-led Senate, but the details are a signal of the Republicans' negotiating position with the White House.

The bill would make able-bodied adults without dependents who receive both federal food assistance and Medicaid benefits subject to work requirements until they are 55 years old, an increase from 49. It also seeks to close a loophole that Republicans have claimed is abused by states, which allows officials to exempt food assistance recipients from work requirements.

Asked if he was open to tougher work requirements for aid programs, Mr. Biden said over the weekend that had voted for such measures as a senator, "but for Medicaid it's a different story."

Michael Kikukawa, a White House spokesman, said Mr. Biden "has been clear that he will not accept proposals that take away people's health coverage."

"The president has been clear he will not accept policies that push Americans into poverty," Mr. Kikukawa said.

Conservatives had initially pushed to tighten those work requirements even further, but more mainstream Republicans in competitive districts balked.

Alan Rappeport contributed reporting.

Fears of Chaos at Southern Border Ease as Crossings Slow

From Page A1



MARK ABRAMSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



CHRISTOPHER LEE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Above, a Border Patrol agent helping migrants who waited to be processed at a detention center in California on Sunday. Left, a family from Venezuela gathering at a bus station in Laredo, Texas, after being released from U.S. custody last week.

After Title 42 ends, agencies perform a successful, if perhaps temporary, triage.

Emergency Management Agency to bolster their relief efforts. Border officials built temporary holding facilities.

The administration also imposed tough new restrictions on who qualifies for asylum, a policy that has drawn fierce attacks and legal challenges from human rights groups. And officials increased the opportunities for migrants to enter the country legally, using a mobile phone app to schedule interviews with an asylum officer.

What followed was a quieter than expected weekend in Texas, Arizona, California and nearby Mexican cities.

At Gate 42 of the border wall with El Paso, the number of migrants arriving has dwindled since Friday. On Sunday morning, the local news media reported, only about 20 people were waiting to turn themselves in. However, state and federal authorities — including the military and migration officials — have intensified operations in Samalayuca, about 30 miles south of Ciudad Juárez, to reduce "risks to the migrant population," they wrote in a statement.

The sprawling migrant encampment caught between walls at the San Diego-Tijuana border has also emptied out in recent days as Customs and Border Protection officers begin to process the people waiting there. Trash bags and abandoned belongings were left behind. On Friday, Tijuana's mayor, Montserrat Caballero, told reporters that "no serious incidents" had been reported by the authorities.

In Tamaulipas, the scenes of chaos that led many desperate families to cross the Rio Grande have mostly disappeared. In Matamoros, two officials with the Red Cross estimated that crossings had continued in an orderly manner. About 200 people showed up at entry points requesting asylum — only one-quarter of whom had not scheduled an appointment through the CBP One app, the officials said in an interview.

Miguel González Ponce, a local pastor who helps house migrants in Ciudad Juárez, confirmed in an interview that shelters across the city had only around 1,400 people.

"Contrary to what was expected, migrants are not arriving en masse," he said.

Administration officials said their new border policies and the added resources contributed to the lack of chaos.

"We have been planning for this transition for months and months," Mr. Mayorkas said on CNN's "State of the Union" on Sunday. He added: "It is too early. But the numbers that we have experienced over the past two days are markedly down over what they were prior to the end of Title 42."

Mr. Biden's prediction of disorder may have helped the administration manage expectations in the run-up to the lifting of Title 42, especially with television cameras broadcasting live from along the border all weekend.

Several thousand migrants crossing on Saturday and Sunday, which would have been considered a large number during normal times, seemed underwhelming compared with the possibility of extended chaos.

But few people in Mr. Biden's administration are celebrating what appears to be a moment of calm amid a continuing storm.

"It is still early," Blas Nuñez-Neto, the assistant secretary for border and immigration policy at the Homeland Security Department, told reporters on Monday.

The conditions in countries that have led to a record number of people fleeing have not changed, Mr. Nuñez-Neto said. And the smugglers who have profited off migrants fleeing to the United States are expected to adapt their moneymaking strategies to fit the new policies in place, he said.

"They will look for any opportunity to make a profit at the expense of vulnerable individuals," he added.

The border remains one of the government's most intractable problems, in part because the United States is at the center of a global shift in migration caused by economic and political deterioration in many South and Central American countries. Helping to rebuild the civil societies in those countries — which the administration has tried to do — may help reduce the number of migrants, but it is a long-term goal with many obstacles.

And dealing with the border has also become one of the country's most polarizing political issues, a situation that has for decades prevented Congress from reaching any meaningful agreement on how to make the system more efficient and fair.

Since taking control of the House of Representatives at the beginning of the year, Republicans have targeted Mr. Mayorkas, with some saying they intended to build a case for his impeachment.

The situation along the border since Thursday's lifting of Title 42 did not provide much obvious momentum for that case. But that did not appear to stop the campaign of criticism aimed at the secretary. The Republican National Committee accused him of refusing to admit the extent of the problems at the border.

"Mayorkas Reaches New Heights of Border Crisis Denial" was the subject of an email from the committee on Friday after the restrictions were lifted.

"Unacceptable," the email read. "The only way their 'plan' is working is if the plan is chaos. Mayorkas should resign."

Mr. Mayorkas and White House officials have shrugged off Republican impeachment threats as little more than political theater. But they have been furious about what they call Republican efforts to "sabotage" the situation at the border through legal action.

Just hours before Title 42 expired, a federal judge acting at the request of Florida's attorney general blocked the administration's plan to release some migrants from severely crowded border facilities without an immigration court appointment. Officials described it as an emergency measure used by previous administrations to save time and avoid dangerous consequences from overcrowding at their facilities.

After the judge's order, the White House press secretary, Karine Jean-Pierre, lashed out at Republicans.

"Even before Title 42 lifted, the attorney general of Florida filed suit to sabotage our effort to humanely and effectively manage the border," she said. "And so that's what we've been seeing from Republican officials over and over again for the past several months."

But the political debate in Washington could still shift suddenly, depending on what happens along the border in the days ahead.

"We are in Day 3," Mr. Mayorkas said on Sunday.

Eileen Sullivan contributed reporting from Washington, and Emiliano Rodríguez Mega from Mexico City.

Durham Slams F.B.I. As Biased in Trump Case

From Page A1

nately, it did not."

Mr. Durham said he was not recommending any "wholesale changes" to F.B.I. rules for politically sensitive investigations and for national-security wiretaps, which have already been tightened in recent years. He did recommend that the Justice Department consider assigning an official to internally challenge steps taken in politically sensitive investigations.

The report amounted, in part, to a defense and justification of a lengthy investigation that developed only two cases, both of which ended in acquittal.

Mr. Durham repeated his own insinuations, presented in court filings, that information developed by Hillary Clinton's campaign had helped fuel the Russia investigation.

He also repeated criticisms made in 2019 by an inspector general who uncovered how the F.B.I. botched wiretap applications used in the inquiry.

In a statement, the F.B.I. emphasized its numerous reforms since the 2019 report.

"The conduct in 2016 and 2017 that Special Counsel Durham examined was the reason that current FBI leadership already implemented dozens of corrective actions, which have now been in place for some time," it said.

Mr. Durham went beyond criticizing the wiretap applications, writing: "Our investigation also revealed that senior F.B.I. personnel displayed a serious lack of analytical rigor toward the information that they received, especially information received from politically affiliated persons and entities. This information in part triggered and sustained Crossfire Hurricane and contributed to the subsequent need for Special Counsel Mueller's investigation."

But in using the word "triggered," Mr. Durham's report echoed a conspiracy theory pushed by supporters of former President Donald J. Trump that the F.B.I. opened the investigation in July 2016 based on the so-called Steele dossier, opposition research indirectly funded by the Clinton campaign that was later discredited.

In fact, as Mr. Durham acknowledged elsewhere in the report, the dossier did not reach those investigators until mid-September. The F.B.I. instead opened the investigation based on a tip from an Australian diplomat that a Trump campaign aide seemed to have advanced knowledge that Russia would release information damaging to the Clinton campaign.

The special prosecutor's findings were sent to Attorney General Merrick B. Garland on Friday, a department spokeswoman said.

Mr. Durham's team submitted a draft report to the F.B.I. and the C.I.A. in March so those agencies could flag classified and other sensitive information, according to people familiar with the matter. A career Justice Department employee also inspected the draft for information that could raise privacy issues for government employees.

The chairman of the House Judiciary Committee and a close Trump ally, Representative Jim Jordan, Republican of Ohio, said on Twitter that he would invite Mr. Durham to testify next week.

Mr. Durham's investigation traces back to early 2019, when the special counsel who took over the Russia investigation, Robert S. Mueller III, delivered a final report that detailed "numerous links between the Russian government and the Trump campaign." It established how Moscow had worked to help Mr. Trump win and how his campaign had expected to benefit from the foreign interference, but Mr. Mueller did not find sufficient evidence to charge any Trump campaign associate with a criminal conspiracy with Russia.

Seizing on the findings, Mr. Trump portrayed that report as having confirmed that there was "no collusion" and as vindication that the Russia investigation was based on a hoax, as he had long insisted.

The next month, Attorney General William P. Barr assigned Mr. Durham, then the U.S. attorney for Connecticut, to scour the Russia investigation for any wrongdoing. Mr. Barr later bestowed special counsel status on Mr. Durham, allowing him to stay in place after Mr. Trump left office.

The Durham report has been long awaited by supporters of Mr. Trump, who once hoped he would prove Mr. Trump's theory that the Russia investigation had been a "deep state" conspiracy to sabotage him for political reasons. Mr. Trump would put high-level political or national security officials in prison, they insisted.

But over an investigation that lasted about four years — far longer than the Russia investigation — Mr. Durham failed to live up to those expectations.

Critics have long argued his investigation was superfluous: an inspector general for the Justice Department, Michael E. Horowitz, was already scrutinizing the Russia investigation for evidence of misconduct or bias, and he released a report on the matter in December 2019.

Mr. Horowitz did not find evidence that the F.B.I. had taken any investigative steps based on improper political reasons. And he concluded that the investigation's basis — the Australian diplomat's tip — had been sufficient to lawfully open the full counterintelligence inquiry.



SAMUEL CORUM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

John H. Durham, left, delivered a report made public Monday about the Russia investigation.

After Mr. Horowitz released his report, Mr. Durham took the extraordinary step of releasing a public statement about his own investigation, which was still underway, saying he disagreed with its conclusions about the origins of the Russia investigation and citing his own access to more information and "evidence collected to date."

In his report, Mr. Durham also criticized the F.B.I. for relying on the Australian diplomat's tip without asking more questions about the credibility of what the Trump campaign aide, George Papadopoulus, had said. But Mr. Durham also acknowledged there was "no question the F.B.I. had an affirmative obligation to closely examine" what the Australians had provided, striking a contradictory tone.

Aitan Goelman, a lawyer for Peter Strzok, the former F.B.I. agent who opened the Russia investigation and interviewed the Australians, defended the inquiry and noted the inspector general had said it was properly predicated.

"When the F.B.I. received credible information from a senior official of a close American ally that the government of Russia was interfering in the upcoming presidential election on behalf of the Trump campaign, the bureau could not ignore that information," he said in a statement.

Mr. Durham also broached the Steele dossier, building on extensive findings by Mr. Horowitz.

In his December 2019 report, Mr. Horowitz had uncovered extensive ways in which the F.B.I. had botched wiretap applications used to target a former Trump campaign adviser with links to Russia, Carter A. Page. That included relying on allegations in the dossier in renewal applications after the F.B.I. had reason to doubt its credibility.

Mr. Horowitz also developed a criminal referral against an F.B.I. lawyer who had doctored an email used in preparation for a renewal application.

Picking up that referral, Mr. Durham negotiated a guilty plea with that lawyer, which resulted in no prison time. But the only two cases Mr. Durham himself developed, both cases of false statements against people involved in outside efforts that raised suspicions over Mr. Trump's possible ties to Russia, ended in acquittal.

As Mr. Durham failed to charge any such conspiracy or indict high-level officials leading up to the 2020 election, some Trump supporters grew disillusioned. In March 2021, Mr. Trump issued a sarcastic statement, asking: "Where's Durham? Is he a living, breathing human being? Will there ever be a Durham report?"

After Mr. Durham had spent a year fruitlessly hunting for evidence to support Mr. Barr's theory that intelligence abuses lurked in the origins of the Russia inquiry, they shifted gears to look for a basis to blame Hillary Clinton's campaign for the fact that Mr. Trump came under suspicion of colluding with Russia.

Mr. Durham went on to bring the two failed false-statements cases — one against Michael Sussmann, a cybersecurity lawyer with Democratic ties who had passed on a tip to the F.B.I. about odd internet data linking servers for the Trump Organization and a Russian bank.

The other was against Igor Danchenko, a primary researcher for the so-called Steele dossier, a discredited compendium of rumors about Mr. Trump's links to Russia that the Clinton campaign had indirectly financed as opposition research.

Mr. Durham's court filings in both cases extensively insinuated that the Clinton campaign had essentially set out to frame Mr. Trump for collusion. Although he charged no conspiracy, he nevertheless insinuated that there might have been one, providing fodder to right-wing media.

Mr. Durham returned to a Clinton theme in his report.

The F.B.I.'s "apparent confirmation bias, and an over-willingness to rely on information from individuals connected to political opponents caused investigators to fail to adequately consider alternative hypotheses and to act without appropriate objectivity or restraint in pursuing allegations of collusion or conspiracy between a U.S. political campaign and a foreign power," Mr. Durham wrote.

Mr. Durham also compared the F.B.I.'s aggression in investigating the Trump-Russia allegations to its greater caution, in his telling, in how it approached several investigations involving allegations related to Mrs. Clinton.

In January, a report by The New York Times, based on interviews with more than a dozen current and former officials, showed how Mr. Durham's inquiry became roiled by internal dissent, leading two prosecutors on his staff to resign in protest over matters of prosecutorial ethics.

The article also described how Mr. Durham used Russian intelligence memos — suspected by other U.S. officials of containing disinformation — to gain access to emails of an aide to George Soros, the liberal philanthropist who is a target of the American right and Russian state media. Mr. Durham shifted to using grand jury powers to obtain the information after a judge twice rejected his request for an order as legally insufficient.

The article also revealed that in the fall of 2019, Italian officials unexpectedly gave Mr. Barr and Mr. Durham a tip about suspected financial crimes linked to Mr. Trump. While the tip was unrelated to the Russia investigation, Mr. Barr had Mr. Durham investigate the matter rather than referring it to another prosecutor. Mr. Durham brought no charges.

Mr. Durham's report did not mention any of those matters.

Man With Bat Hurts 2 Aides At Lawmaker's Virginia Office

*This article is by **Luke Broadwater**, **Remy Tumin** and **Stephanie Lai**.*

WASHINGTON — A man armed with a baseball bat and demanding to see Representative Gerald E. Connolly, Democrat of Virginia, attacked and injured two staff aides in a rampage inside the congressman's Fairfax, Va., office, the latest episode in a surge of political violence across the country.

Xuan Kha Tran Pham, 49, of Fairfax, was facing charges for one count of felony aggravated malicious wounding and one count of malicious wounding, according to the Fairfax City Police Department. He was being held without bond.

Police said they had not yet identified a motive, and Capitol Police said in a statement that the suspect was not known to them.

Sgt. Lisa Gardner, a spokeswoman for the Fairfax City Police, said at a news conference on Monday afternoon that the assailant walked into Mr. Connolly's office after 10:30 a.m. with what appeared to be a metal baseball bat and struck two staff members in the upper body.

Both staff members were conscious when the police arrived about five minutes after a 911 call, she said. They were taken to and then released from a hospital, Mr. Connolly said.

"You could absolutely tell that the people inside were scared; they were hiding," Sergeant Gardner said.

"It's quite frankly scary that someone can walk up to an office with a baseball bat and just start swinging at innocent victims," she added.

Mr. Connolly represents a swath of the Northern Virginia suburbs west of Washington, D.C. He was elected to Congress in 2008. In a statement after the attack, he said he had "the best team in Congress."

"My district office staff make themselves available to constituents and members of the public every day," he said. "The thought that someone would take advantage of my staff's accessibility to commit an act of violence is unconscionable and devastating."

Speaking later to reporters on Capitol Hill, Mr. Connolly said the attacker struck one of his senior aides in the head with the metal bat, and hit an intern in the side — on her first day on the job.

"Imagine your first day in the office," a man "comes in with a baseball bat and beats you," Mr. Connolly said.

While members of Congress are protected on Capitol Hill by the United States Capitol Police, their district offices generally do not receive such protection unless there is a specific known threat.

In Monday's attack, the assailant caused substantial damage in Mr. Connolly's office, shattering glass in a conference room and breaking computers.

Mr. Pham was taken into custody within five minutes of police arriving on the scene.

Last year, Mr. Pham filed a federal lawsuit in Virginia against the C.I.A. alleging that the agency had imprisoned him for decades in a "lower perspective based on physics called the book world" and demanding $29 million. The suit, which was handwritten, claimed the agency was "brutally torturing" him with a "degenerative disability" from the "fourth dimension."

Representative Hakeem Jeffries of New York, the top Democrat in the House, called the attack "horrific."

"We are grateful for the members of law enforcement and medical professionals who swiftly acted to apprehend the suspect and care for the affected members of our Capitol Hill community," he said. "The safety of our members and of our staff remains of paramount importance, particularly given the increased instances of political violence in our country."

Mr. Jeffries said he asked the House sergeant-at-arms and the Capitol Police to "take every available precaution to protect members and our staff, who serve the American people with patriotism and passion and deserve to do so without fear for their safety."

Speaker Kevin McCarthy said he had reached out to Mr. Connolly after the attack. "We're all praying for the quick recovery for the staffers injured and grateful for the quick actions of the law enforcement who apprehended the suspect," Mr. McCarthy said.

The attack comes amid a rise in threats and violent political speech against members of Congress in recent years. In October, an intruder bludgeoned Representative Nancy Pelosi's husband, Paul, with a hammer inside their San Francisco home after the attacker shouted, "Where is Nancy?"

Catie Edmondson contributed reporting.

Supreme Court Will Wade Into Fight on Trump Hotel

By ADAM LIPTAK

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court announced on Monday that it would decide whether individual members of Congress could sue a government agency for information about a Washington hotel once owned by former President Donald J. Trump.

Days before Mr. Trump left office, a divided panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled that members of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, all Democrats and making up less than a majority of the panel's members, had standing to sue for access to government documents concerning possible conflicts of interest at the Trump International Hotel.

A company owned by Mr. Trump and his children had leased the facility, once known as the Old Post Office Building, in 2013. The lease said no "elected official of the government of the United States" shall "be admitted to any share or part of this lease, or to any benefit that may arise therefrom."

Critics said Mr. Trump's ownership of the hotel while president raised a host of ethical questions, some of constitutional dimension. The Trump family sold the hotel last year, and it is now operating as a Waldorf Astoria.

A federal law enacted in 1928 empowers any seven members of the House oversight committee to obtain information from agencies in its jurisdiction. In 2017, after having been repeatedly rebuffed by the General Services Administration for documents concerning the hotel, Representative Elijah E. Cummings, then the committee's ranking member, along with 16 colleagues, issued a request under the 1928 law.

The agency refused to comply, saying that "individual members of Congress, including ranking minority members, do not have the authority to conduct oversight."

The lawmakers sued, and a trial judge dismissed the case on standing grounds.



ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Trump family owned a hotel in Washington before selling it last year. It is now operating as a Waldorf Astoria.

Judge Patricia A. Millett, writing for the majority, said the lawmakers had standing to sue.

"A rebuffed request for information to which the requester is statutorily entitled is a concrete, particularized and individualized personal injury," she wrote, adding, "The separation of powers, it must be remembered, is not a one-way street that runs to the aggrandizement of the executive branch."

In dissent, Judge Douglas H. Ginsburg wrote that individual members of Congress lacked standing to assert the institutional interests of the legislature.

The full D.C. Circuit, over the dissents of four judges, refused to rehear the case. The Biden administration, apparently putting institutional considerations over partisan interests, sought review from the Supreme Court.

"Our nation's history makes clear," Solicitor General Elizabeth B. Prelogar wrote, "that an informational dispute between members of Congress and the executive branch is not of the sort traditionally thought to be capable of resolution through the judicial process."

She added that "members of Congress have ample means, short of suing in federal court, for redressing official-capacity harms" like a denial of a request under the 1928 law.

"They may draw public attention to agency failures at oversight hearings, seek to persuade their colleagues to restrict agency budgets or take other measures, vote for bills that the president opposes, and vote against bills that the president supports," Ms. Prelogar wrote.

In response, lawyers for the lawmakers urged the justices not to hear the dispute, saying it was too idiosyncratic to warrant Supreme Court review.

The court agreed to hear the case, Carnahan v. Maloney, No. 22-425, even though the number of committee members involved has dropped to five. Though the 1928 law refers to a minimum of seven members, neither side argued the case was moot.

Justices Will Weigh Racial Bias Allegations in South Carolina Map

By ADAM LIPTAK

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court said on Monday that it would decide whether a congressional voting district in South Carolina should be restored after a lower court struck it down as an unconstitutional racial gerrymander.

A unanimous three-judge panel of the Federal District Court in Columbia, S.C., ruled in January that the state's First Congressional District, drawn after the 2020 census, violated the Constitution by making race the predominant factor.

The district, anchored in Charleston, had elected a Republican every year since 1980, with the exception of 2018. But the 2020 race was close, with less than one percentage point separating the candidates, and Republican lawmakers "sought to create a stronger Republican tilt" in the district after the 2020 census, the panel wrote.

The lawmakers achieved that goal, the panel found, in part by the "bleaching of African American voters out of the Charleston County portion of Congressional District No. 1."

The new House map moved 62 percent of Black voters in Charleston County from the First District to the Sixth District, a seat that Representative James E. Clyburn, a Black Democrat, has held for 30 years.

The move helped make the new First District a Republican stronghold. In November, Nancy Mace, the Republican incumbent, won re-election by 14 percentage points.

Republican lawmakers acknowledged that they had redrawn the First District for partisan gain. But they said they had not considered race in the process.

The panel ruled that the district's boundaries must be redrawn before future elections. But the panel rejected challenges to two other House voting districts, saying civil rights groups had failed to demonstrate the districts had been predominantly drawn to dilute Black voting power.

The Supreme Court has said that lawmakers can take race into account in drawing voting districts to comply with the Voting Rights Act but cannot make it the predominant factor. That principle, rooted in the Constitution's equal protection clause, is often invoked to limit the creation of districts that empower minority voters.

In the new case, Alexander v. South Carolina State Conference of the N.A.A.C.P., No. 22-807, the challenge came from the opposite direction, saying that the map hurt Black voters by moving them from one congressional district to another.

The Supreme Court will soon decide whether to allow a congressional map drawn by Republican lawmakers in Alabama. A lower court had said the map diluted the power of Black voters, violating the Voting Rights Act. The South Carolina case poses different questions, centered on the Constitution's equal protection principles.

In their Supreme Court appeal, South Carolina Republicans argued that the panel should have presumed that they had acted in good faith, as required by Supreme Court precedent, and analyzed the district as a whole.

"The result," the lawmakers wrote, quoting from an earlier decision, "is a thinly reasoned order that presumes bad faith, erroneously equates the purported racial effect of a single line in Charleston County with racial predominance across District 1, and is riddled with 'legal mistakes' that improperly relieved plaintiffs of their 'demanding' burden to prove that race was the 'predominant consideration.'"

The challengers, represented by the American Civil Liberties Union and the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense and Educational Fund, told the justices that "the panel correctly found that race was the gerrymander's primary vehicle."

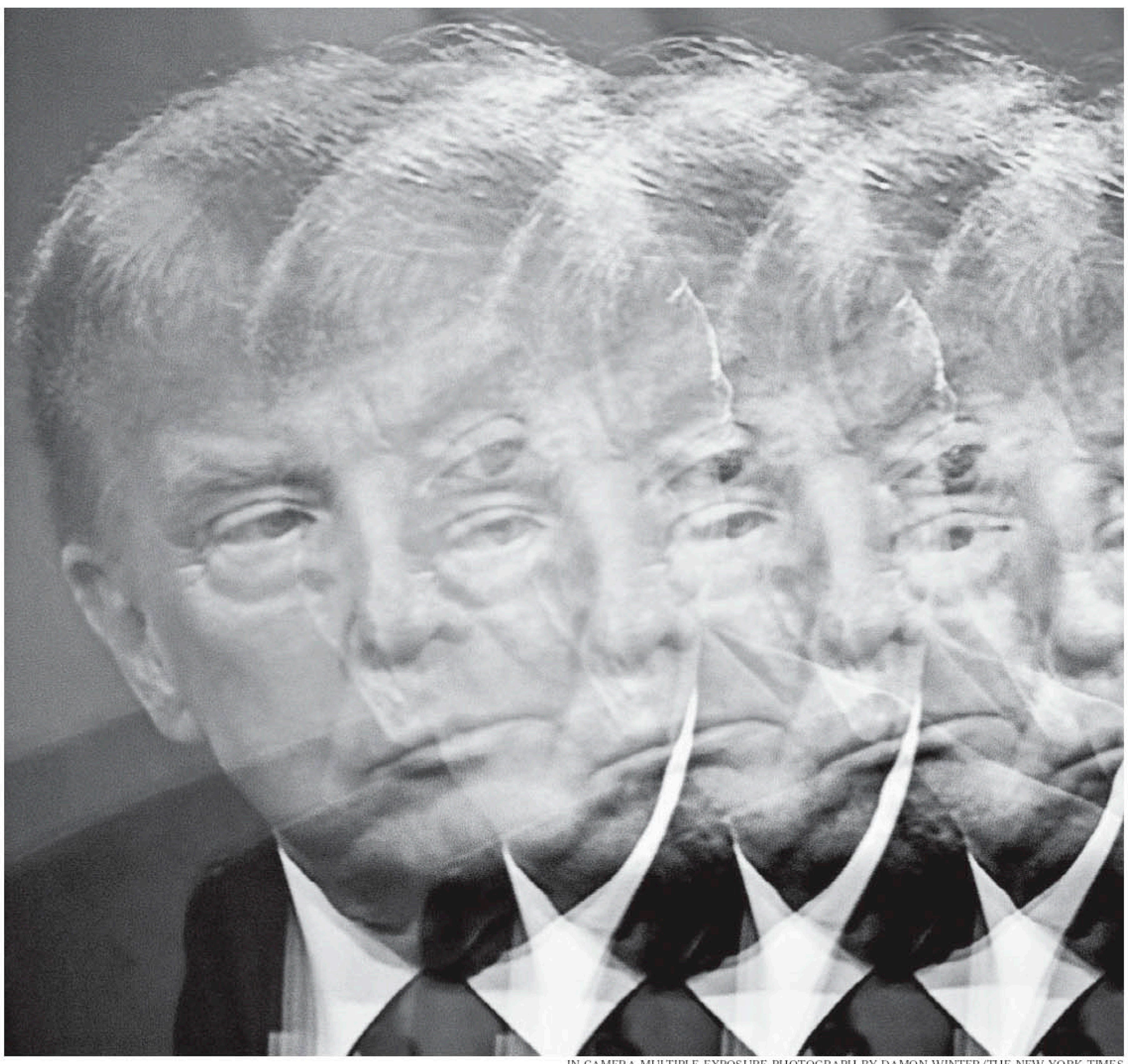
More National news appears on Page A24.

Opinion

The New York Times

THE CONVERSATION | GAIL COLLINS AND BRET STEPHENS

Trump Cannot Be Unseen



IN-CAMERA MULTIPLE EXPOSURE PHOTOGRAPH BY DAMON WINTER/THE NEW YORK TIMES

The more attention given to the ex-president, the stronger he gets.

Gail Collins: Hey, Bret, good to be conversing again. Heck of a lot going on. Before we get to the border or the budget, though, let me admit I'm shallow and start with the Trump town hall on CNN.

Bret Stephens: Not shallow, Gail. But you are depressing me.

Gail: Trump lost your Republican vote a long time ago, but if you were still on the fence, was there anything on display that evening that would have had an impact?

Bret: I'm not exactly a reliable gauge of how today's Republicans think: In November, I wrote a column called "Donald Trump Is Finally Finished," which I may have to spend the rest of my life living down.

That said, I would guess that if you're the sort of voter who liked 80-proof Trump, you're gonna love 120-proof Trump. And that's what he was in that CNN town hall: more mendacious, more shameless, more unapologetic, more aggressive, nastier. But also undeniably vigorous, particularly when compared with Joe Biden. My guess is the town hall will consolidate his lead as the Republican front-runner.

Your take? Should CNN have given him the platform?

Gail: Don't see any reason CNN shouldn't have done the interview. Except that it reduces pressure on Trump to show up for any Republican primary debates. Which he naturally wants to avoid, given his ineptitude when it comes to actual policy questions.

Bret: I'm of two minds. The media has a responsibility to cover the Republican front-runner, and I thought Kaitlan Collins, the CNN moderator, handled the responsibility about as well as anyone could have. Yet nonstop media attention is the oxygen on which Trump thrives. The more attention we give him — which is what we are doing right now — the stronger he gets.

Gail: About the impact: Yeah, if you liked Trump before, you wouldn't be deterred by his willingness to let the nation default, or his being "inclined" to pardon a lot of the Jan. 6 rioters.

Really would like to hear an everybody-in primary debate, though. Without Trump, I guess the only suspense would be whether Ron DeSantis is capable of being . . . not terrible.

Bret: Well, as much as I dislike DeSantis for his views on abortion and Ukraine and free speech, I also have to ask whether I'd prefer him to Trump as the Republican nominee. And there the answer is a resounding yes, much as I'd much prefer a peptic ulcer to stomach cancer.

Gail: I'm still not inclined to pick DeSantis over — pretty much anybody. Yeah, Trump is worse when it comes to personal morality, and DeSantis probably wouldn't be as divisive in the sense of not being exciting enough to really rile up the base.

But his position on social issues like abortion is scary: He truly believes in imposing his extremist convictions on the country.

Bret: True, but Trump believes in imposing his despotic convictions on the country.

I also think it's imperative that Democrats — and I don't mean Robert Kennedy Jr. — start thinking about challenging Biden in the primary. That Washington Post/ABC poll showing Biden with a 36 percent approval rating and running six points behind Trump should scare the bejeezus out of Democrats — and that's *before* we wind up in a recession or a full-scale banking crisis or a shooting war with China (or all three).

Gail: Real-life fact is that no Democrat with the standing to potentially win a primary would challenge a sitting president. Especially one like Biden, whose performance is . . . not bad. He's had some real achievements, particularly in the super-important battle against global warming. Overall, yes, he's unexciting, and these days incapable of forcing the House Republicans to do anything really constructive. But his standards and character are high.

Bret: As you know, I will vote for him over Trump or DeSantis. But Democrats overstate his achievements and underestimate his unpopularity at their own — actually, our own — peril.

Gail: We both were wishing he'd announce he wasn't running and open the door for other promising candidates to jump in. But since it's not gonna happen . . . it's not gonna happen.

Bret: Probably right. Next subject: Your thoughts about the budget negotiations?

Gail: I have faith that there's not going to be a crushing default — that in a total crisis the Fed will figure out something. But when it comes to the bottom line, I'm on the side of Joe Biden. (Surprise!) You do not use the country's credit standing to stage a stupid battle about cutting funds for the poor.

Bret: Well, by the same token, you do not use the country's credit standing to insist that no spending cuts should even be countenanced and that able-bodied single adults should not have to find work as a condition of obtaining government benefits.

Gail: The Republicans are attacking the status quo, not some new program the Democrats are trying to push through. And I've always been wary of the must-work stuff because all the paperwork, even in our technological era, makes it so easy for people to get cut off for no reason except bureaucratic confusion.

Bret: The conservative in me hates subsidizing indolence, especially when jobs are abundant. Welfare should go to those who truly need it, not people who just can't be bothered to work.

Gail: Also, I think this must-work discussion has to begin with quality child care for every low-income family that needs it. Very bottom bottom line is that kids come first.

About the budget — I guess Congress could just decide there shouldn't be a debt ceiling. After all, we went more than 125 years without one. Is that something you think they should rally around?

Bret: The debt ceiling reminds me a bit of the doomsday machine in Stanley Kubrick's "Dr. Strangelove." In theory, it's supposed to encourage restraint and responsibility. In practice, it's likely to destroy the world. I'd be interested to see the administration test the theory that the 14th Amendment, which says that the public debt of the United States "shall not be questioned," makes the debt ceiling unconstitutional, although I doubt they could win that case in court.

The other crisis, Gail, is happening at the southern border. Looking back, anything the administration might have done to avert it?

Gail: Not gonna be silly enough to claim the Biden folks have been completely on top of the whole situation.

Bret: Our awesome veep . . . .

Gail: But it looks like we'll finally be getting a lot of new federal workers to deal with the people who show up at the border.

And the Biden administration is working on it. The Trump administration was totally useless on the problem.

Bret: Not useless but definitely cruel. But what voters will remember is that under Trump, we didn't have this scale of a crisis.

Gail: Not sure the scale is really going to be that overwhelming as the year moves on. And I still have to note that I hate, really hate, your idea of finishing that wall.

Bret: A wall won't stop all illegal immigration. But it can help deter the most dangerous and reckless border crossings, which have left thousands of migrants dead. It should be part of an overall immigration compromise that includes automatic citizenship for Dreamers and more permissive rules for legal immigration through normal consular channels in the migrants' home countries. Right now we have the worst of both worlds: a totally chaotic border that makes a bipartisan legislative compromise a political nonstarter.

Gail: Bret, these people have a lot of reasons for coming — including seeking asylum from government oppression. But most of them are coming for jobs, and as you've always pointed out, our economy really needs the workers. In New York, we've gotten a ton of newcomers. They're having a terrible time, particularly with housing, but employers, especially in the service industries, are desperate for their help. We just need to work out a system to make it possible.

Bret: Sadly, as our news-side colleague Hannah Dreier chronicled last month, many recent border crossers are children working in conditions worthy of Dickens or Dreiser. Seeing mothers with young children strapped to their backs while hawking candies at traffic stops was something I was accustomed to in my hometown, Mexico City. It's jarring to encounter them at road intersections and on subway platforms in New York City. If Biden doesn't get a handle on this, it could cost him the election and lead to an ugly public backlash that will make Trump's immigration policy seem tame.

Speaking of subways, Gail, your thoughts on the killing of Jordan Neely?

Gail: We're talking about a former Michael Jackson impersonator who used to entertain subway passengers but had deteriorated into a homeless man who was mentally ill and sometimes scary.

Bret: Very scary. He was a person who had been arrested more than 30 times. He had punched an elderly woman in the face. He had exposed himself and peed inside a subway car. He had walked out on a residential treatment program. There was a warrant for his arrest at the time of his death — but cops probably wouldn't have found out about it because a group sued to stop the police from detaining people solely to check for arrest warrants. He was the sort of guy who makes the subway frightening for a lot of passengers, particularly women. People ought to know these facts before rushing to judgment.

Gail: Neely was acting out and frightening people on the day he died. Daniel Penny, the former Marine who tackled him, was trying to stop an unnerving incident from happening. But he used chokehold force in a way that killed Neely.

I can't absolve Penny. But the big problem here is that the low- or no-income mentally ill need more services than they're getting in New York or pretty much anywhere.

Bret: Obviously, I don't support vigilantism. But that's what you get when police are hampered from maintaining public order. The answer is to give the police the authorities and resources they need to deal with someone like Neely before a tragedy occurs.

Gail, this is too grim a note on which to end — and we haven't even touched on George Santos's indictment.

Gail: Now, there's a high note!

Bret: Before we go, I want to put in a word for Sam Roberts's obituary for Mike Pride, a former editor of The Concord Monitor, who died last month in Florida at 76 and whom we both knew through his stewardship of the Pulitzer Prizes. Mike showed that you can often make the greatest difference as a newsman by writing about issues that are near to people's everyday lives. He reminded us that local journalism matters. And that it's at least one thing that deserves to be made great again.

COLUMNIST | PAUL KRUGMAN

Why Are Americans So Negative About the Economy?

ALMOST A YEAR has passed since the Bureau of Economic Analysis announced that the U.S. economy had contracted for two quarters in a row. Some people believe, wrongly, that two quarters of falling G.D.P. is the official definition of a recession. Economic negativity ran rampant, especially but not only on the political right.

The interesting question now is why, at least according to some surveys, the public remains very negative on the economy — as negative as it has been in the past amid severe economic downturns — even though those recession calls were clearly a false alarm, and the economy is actually looking remarkably strong. Or maybe the question should be why people *say* that they're very negative on the economy.

This is a touchy subject, albeit one I've commented on before. You don't want to say that Americans are stupid; you certainly don't want to sound like that John McCain adviser who insisted that America was a "nation of whiners" who were experiencing only a "mental recession."

On the other hand, there are now huge gaps between what people say about the economy and both what the data says and what they say about their own experience. And we have some new information on what lies behind these gaps.

First, about that much-hyped "Biden recession." The actual definition of a recession involves several economic indicators, and aside from those two G.D.P. numbers, nothing that has happened to the economy looks remotely like a recession.

Since December 2021 the U.S. economy has added almost six million jobs while the unemployment rate has fallen from 3.9 percent to 3.4 percent, a level not seen since the 1960s. And no, unemployment isn't low because Americans have dropped out of the labor force: The percentage of adults either working or looking for a job has declined, but that's almost entirely a result of an aging population, and labor force participation is right back in line with prepandemic projections.

And these are good jobs, according to workers themselves. According to the Conference Board, which has been surveying job satisfaction since 1987, "U.S. workers have never been more content."

To be sure, the return of serious inflation after decades of quiescence rattled everyone, and not just because it reduced real incomes. (Real wages fell during Ronald Reagan's second term, but people felt pretty good about the economy anyway.) One benefit of low inflation is that it gives people one less thing to worry about; according to the American Psychiatric Association, inflation was a major source of stress during 2022.

But inflation, while still elevated, has come way down. The inflation rate over the past six months was 3.3 percent, compared with 9.6 percent last June. The price of gasoline, a major political talking point last year, is now more or less normal compared with average earnings.

And people have noticed. In October, 20 percent of Americans named inflation as the most important problem facing the nation; that's now down to 9 percent.

So what's going on? The general rule seems to be that Americans are feeling good about their personal situation but believe that bad things are happening to other people. A Federal Reserve study found that in late 2021 a record-high percentage of Americans were positive about their own finances while a record low were positive about the economy. We don't have results for 2022 yet, but my guess is that they'll look similar.

Partisanship surely explains much of this divergence. A newly published study shows that who holds the White House has huge effects on views of the economy; this is true for supporters of both parties, although the effect appears to be about twice as strong for Republicans. The study also finds, however, that these changes in reported views don't appear to have any effect on actual spending — that they reflect "cheerleading," as opposed to "actual expectations."

Huge gaps exist between what people say and what the numbers show.

Beyond that, there's good reason to believe that media reports about the economy have had a strongly negative bias. One thing that has gone really, really right in America lately is job creation, yet the public consistently reports having heard more negative than positive news about employment.

And let's not let economists off the hook. As Mark Zandi of Moody's Analytics points out, many economists have been predicting recession month after month for the past year. Sooner or later, a recession will no doubt happen, but as he says, "In my 30-plus years as a professional economist, I've never seen such recession pessimism," even as the economy has remained resilient. And this pessimism has surely filtered through to the public.

So where does all this leave us? America hasn't yet brought inflation back to prepandemic levels, and we may yet have an economic hard landing. But so far, at least, we've had a stunningly successful recovery from the Covid shock.

While many Americans tell surveys that things are terrible — which says something about how people respond to surveys and where they get their information — this doesn't contradict that positive assessment.

Protests in France Are Lifting the Far Right

Mitchell Abidor and Miguel Lago
Mitchell Abidor is the author of several books about French radical movements. Miguel Lago is a political scientist.

FOR three months, France has been in revolt: Demonstrators have marched; railroad workers have blocked tracks; barricades and buildings have been set aflame; protesters have done battle in the street with police officers. The most recent innovation has been tamer: People have banged pots whenever the president has appeared. The cause? President Emmanuel Macron's measure raising the retirement age from 62 to 64.

This might at first glance appear to be the work of a vibrant political left wing, fighting pro-business, anti-worker policies from a center-right technocratic government. Indeed, France's labor unions — though representing a smaller share of the work force than elsewhere in Western Europe — have been united in their opposition, making them a redoubtable force. Jean-Luc Mélenchon, who leads the left-wing coalition NUPES, has been a central figure in the parliamentary fight against Mr. Macron, nearly bringing down his government with a no-confidence vote in March.

And yet it is not France's left that has benefited from the popular rebellion. It is the far right.

Recent polls showed that if last year's head-to-head presidential election were held now, Marine Le Pen, the leader of the far-right Rassemblement National, would beat Mr. Macron handily, 55 to 45 percent. Other polls that list all possible candidates have shown that Mr. Mélenchon, despite his and his group's support for the anti-Macron movement, has gained a mere percentage point since last year's elections, hovering at around a quarter of the votes and, in some scenarios, only 20 percent.

In a situation that seems tailor-made for a resurgence of the left, how is it that, for the moment, at least, it is not just the right but the far right that has benefited?

Hatred of the established order is no longer a marker of leftism, and France's recent history testifies to this. The Yellow Vests, France's last mass protest movement, which began in response to an eco-friendly hike in gas taxes in 2018, was a strange hodgepodge of positions and attitudes, and its political leanings varied from city to city and even differed from one roundabout to another where the protesters gathered.

The movement rejected attempts by politicians to join them and very early developed a solid right-leaning conspiratorial element. Jacline Mouraud, whose October 2018 video helped spark the movement, later supported the far-right presidential candidate Eric Zemmour, a committed racist. A direct outgrowth of the Yellow Vests was the phenomenal popularity of the 2020 Covid conspiracy film "Hold Up," as was a vocal anti-mask movement.

The right-wing populist current in the Yellow Vests from just a few years ago has not vanished, and it is making itself felt in the new polls. The Rassemblement National has been the face of the populist right since its beginnings, and its history has been one of growth. These polls are a sign that this move has continued, to the benefit of Ms. Le Pen.

Her rise has been assisted by the missteps of her foes. How the increase in retirement age was finally made law — bypassing a vote in the National Assembly — was seen as a confirmation of Mr. Macron's undemocratic, even authoritarian tendencies. The political center and center right have been neutralized by their support for the president's unpopular measure. In response, the center and center right are on the attack. It is their opponents, the centrists say, who are the true threat to democracy: the left for its support of violent protests and the far right by its very nature. Mr. Macron's ministers hammer away at this idea in the media.



LOU BENOIST/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Marine Le Pen at a gathering in May for the Rassemblement National party in Le Havre, France.

For its part, the left has been hampered by its own inadequacies. Mr. Mélenchon and his coalition, betting heavily that anti-Macron sentiment will benefit them, have lacked a coherent strategy, other than maintaining pressure through advocating increased mobilization while adopting disruptive tactics in the National Assembly. Last October, well before the current crisis, polls showed that their rowdiness during legislative sessions had already led many to think left-wing politicians were incapable of governing. This political mayhem has thus far helped only the Rassemblement National, which is no longer universally viewed as a political pariah.

By raising the retirement age, Macron helped Le Pen seem like the voice of reason.

Ms. Le Pen and her party, remarkably, have become, in the eyes of many, the voice of la France profonde, the voice of reason. She has condemned the violence on the streets (though never the police's), as well as Mr. Macron for "losing the meaning of democracy," adding, "When the ruler wants something and the people don't, it should not be done." She has promised that she will reverse the retirement age change if — when — she's elected.

Her party's 88 members of the National Assembly, the third-largest group in the legislative body, have succeeded in further normalizing the far right by playing the role of the adults in the room. The far right is managing to present itself as the defenders of democracy, imperiled by Mr. Macron's diktats, and of stability, threatened by left-wing chaos.

Is this a durable position? The Yellow Vest movement did not lead to the defeat of Mr. Macron in 2022. But those elections did see Ms. Le Pen receive more votes than her party ever had.

The government's mishandling of the pension overhaul, from failing to convince the French that it was even necessary to forcing it through when it was unable to obtain a legislative majority, has increased the people's animus toward politics and politicians. Over the past four decades, every political alternative but the far right has been tried and found wanting — the Socialists of François Mitterrand and François Hollande, the conservatives of Nicolas Sarkozy and the center and Mr. Macron.

Though much of this held true a year ago, the change in the retirement age touched something fundamental in the French, cementing the divorce between the people and politicians. Ms. Le Pen has never held power, and so she has never failed her voters. She offers a fresh start and holds out the promise that, unlike those who have ruled France till now, she will defend the people's interests. For now, at least, this argument is perhaps the clinching one in the minds of many in France.

COLUMNIST | MICHELLE GOLDBERG

Christian Nationalism Will Dominate in 2024

LAST WEEK the ReAwaken America Tour, a Christian nationalist roadshow co-founded by the former Trump national security adviser Michael Flynn, rolled up to the Trump National Doral Miami resort. Two speakers who'd appeared at other stops on the tour, the online streamers Scott McKay and Charlie Ward, were jettisoned at the last moment because of bad publicity over their praise of Hitler. ("Hitler was actually fighting the same people that we're trying to take down today," said McKay, not inaccurately.) But as of this writing, the tour's website still includes McKay and Ward, along with Eric Trump, as featured speakers at an upcoming extravaganza in Las Vegas.

ReAwaken America's association with anti-Semites did not stop Donald Trump from calling into the rally to offer his support. "It's a wonderful hotel, but you're there for an even more important purpose," he told a shrieking crowd, before promising to bring Flynn back in for a second Trump term. Flynn is exactly the sort of figure we can expect to serve in a future Trump administration — a MAGA die-hard uninterested in restraining Trump. So it's worth paying attention to how he has changed since he was last on the national stage.

Flynn has long been a paranoid Islamophobe, and toward the end of Trump's presidency, he emerged as a full-fledged authoritarian, calling on Trump to invoke martial law after the 2020 election. Now he's become, in addition to an anti-vaccine conspiracy theorist and QAnon adherent, one of the country's most prominent Christian nationalists. "If we are going to have one nation under God, which we must, we have to have one religion," he said at a 2021 ReAwaken America event. "One nation under God and one religion under God, right?"

A major question for Republicans in 2024 is whether this militant version of Christian nationalism — one often rooted in Pentecostalism, with its emphasis on prophecy and revelation — can overcome the qualms of more mainstream evangelicals. The issue isn't whether the next Republican presidential candidate is going to be a Christian nationalist, meaning someone who rejects the separation of church and state and treats Christianity as the foundation of American identity and law. That's a foregone conclusion in a party whose state lawmakers are falling over themselves to pass book bans, abortion prohibitions, anti-trans laws, and, in Texas, bills authorizing school prayer and the posting of the Ten Commandments in classrooms.

What's not yet clear, though, is what sort of Christian nationalism will prevail: the elite, doctrinaire variety of candidates like Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, or the violently messianic version embodied by Flynn and Trump.

ReAwaken America's Miami stop had just concluded when Trump ran afoul of some more traditional evangelical leaders in his effort to set himself apart from DeSantis. In a Monday interview with The Messenger, he criticized the six-week abortion ban DeSantis signed in Florida, even as he would not say whether he'd sign a similar one himself. "He signed six weeks, and many people within the pro-life movement feel that that was too harsh," said Trump.

Of course, lots of people believe that the Florida law is too harsh, but they're not generally members of the anti-abortion movement, where Trump's statement was poorly received. Rebuking Trump, Bob Vander Plaats, probably the most influential evangelical leader in Iowa, tweeted, "The #IowaCaucus door just flung wide open." The right-wing Iowa talk show host Steve Deace tweeted that he was "potentially throwing away the Iowa Caucuses on the pro-life issue."

There is an obvious opening for DeSantis here. He is fluent in the language of the religious right, and strives to check all its policy boxes. "Put on the full armor of God. Stand firm against the left's schemes," he said at the Christian Hillsdale College last year, substituting the "left's schemes" for the "devil's schemes" of Ephesians 6:11. In addition to the abortion ban and his war on "woke" education, he will almost certainly sign a recently passed bill intended to keep trans people from using their preferred bathrooms in government buildings, including schools.

But it remains to be seen whether rank-and-file religious conservatives care more about consistency or charisma. For the religious following that Trump has nurtured, he's less a person who will put in place a specific Christian nationalist agenda than he is the incarnation of that agenda. Amanda Tyler, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty and the organizer of Christians against Christian Nationalism, attended the ReAwaken America event at Trump Doral. She described a type of Christian nationalist fervor that was "very much tied to the political future of Donald Trump and nothing else."

The battle between DeSantis's orthodoxy and Trump's violent messianism.

Tyler didn't hear any of the ReAwaken speakers talk about abortion. Instead, she said, they spoke about "spiritual warfare." There was also "a lot of talking about guns, about this sense that you're put here for this time and this place."

If DeSantis treats Christianity as a moral code he'd like to impose on the rest of us, Trump treats it as an elevated status that should come with special perks. That's how he can slam DeSantis for being "sanctimonious" even as he wraps his own campaign in biblical raiment. If a Republican wins in 2024, the victor will preside over a Christian nationalist administration. The question is whether that person will champion an orthodoxy or a cult.

LETTERS

A Clash Over the Value of Third Parties

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "Repulsed by Biden vs. Trump? Tough," by Gail Collins (column, May 4):

Ms. Collins's diatribe scapegoating me and the Green Party for the Democrats' loss of the presidency in 2000 might have been tempered by consulting Al Gore. He has respected third-party candidates exercising their First Amendment rights to offer more voices and choices on the ballot.

Democrats know the many sine qua nons that sabotaged Mr. Gore's popular-vote victory. Three were the anti-democratic Electoral College, the documented corrupt Republican election process in Florida and the Supreme Court's partisan judicial coup that stopped the ongoing statewide recount ordered by the Florida Supreme Court and gave George W. Bush the White House.

Third parties have had a galvanizing reform influence on our country from the anti-slavery Liberty Party in 1840 to the labor, farmer and populist parties. The major parties later adopted popular third-party issues to win more support.

Votes are to be earned, not owned.

RALPH NADER, WASHINGTON

TO THE EDITOR:

Gail Collins's column reminded me of why my reasons for voting have changed over the years.

As a 19-year-old in 1972, I was thrilled to cast my first presidential vote for George McGovern. We all knew that he would lose to the vile Richard Nixon, but ah, I was so idealistic!

Eight years later, and angry at Jimmy Carter for whatever reasons, I voted for John Anderson, a well-spoken moderate Republican running as an independent. Given the outcome of that election, I decided never again to vote for a third-party candidate. The outcome is never what you want.

Third-party candidates are always doomed to failure from the beginning, despite the allure of "purists" who think their noble ways of thinking and speaking are "it."

They can win your heart and tickle your brain, but our two-party system works pretty well, despite the tragedy of having an Electoral College. But that's where the danger begins. Voting involves strategy, and that's what so many voters lack. My vote in 1980 was, in essence, a vote for Ronald Reagan.

In 2024, my ballot will be cast to ensure that the 45th president does not become the 47th.

JON HUNT
OLD GREENWICH, CONN.

TO THE EDITOR:

About two-thirds of Americans don't want a repeat of Joe Biden vs. Donald Trump, expressing displeasure with both candidates. No Labels, the group that is considering a third-party candidate, is simply a response. If it moves forward, it can succeed only with a candidate who is supported by that large portion of Americans who are unhappy with the likely nominees of the two major parties.

Is there such a candidate? That is the ultimate hurdle for any third-party candidacy. Wouldn't it be nice to have an option to vote for someone rather than vote against the worse of two evils?

JIM MEYER, JUPITER, FLA.

TO THE EDITOR:

Gail Collins convincingly describes the recklessness of voting for third-party candidates simply to register dissatisfaction with the major-party choices. Those protest votes can lead to the election of a candidate who would not have won, except for the third-party spoiler. It's an unintended consequence of plurality elections, where candidates with the most votes can win despite being disliked by a majority of voters.

There's a simple solution: ranked choice voting, which allows voters to rank the candidates in order of preference. In a ranked choice election, voters can express their true preferences without worrying about "throwing their vote away" on a candidate with no chance of winning, which may help elect the candidate they like least.

By design, in a ranked choice election, the winner is the candidate preferred by a majority of voters. Which is how it should be in a representative democracy.

JONATHAN PERLOE
COS COB, CONN.

The writer is a co-founder of Voter Choice Connecticut, a volunteer group working to bring ranked choice voting to Connecticut.

I Do (Have the Right to Preside at Your Wedding)

TO THE EDITOR:

"Today, and Today Only, I Can Pronounce Thee Wed" (Vows, Sunday Styles, April 30) and "I'm Not Sure if I Can Announce You Married" (The Story Behind the Story, April 30) report on a new law that allows a layperson in New York State to get a one-day license to officiate at a wedding.

The idea that until very recently in some states — including parts of New York — the only legal unions were those performed by ordained members of the clergy or certain government officials was a revelation to me.

And the fact that many couples didn't even realize that they had not been legally married until they filed for divorce makes it even more surreal.

How this affected the Vows announcements over the years is certainly intriguing, but the idea that in a country founded on the separation of church and state this has been a practice for so long is almost unbelievable.

Thank you to the New York State legislators who have been so unrelenting in getting this corrected and thank you, Gov. Kathy Hochul, for signing the new legislation.

BETSY FRANK, MATTITUCK, N.Y.

TO THE EDITOR:

The Universal Life Church still has ministers in New York State who have performed weddings, and presumably they will continue to do so. We've defended our ministers across the country, and are committed to ensuring that the rights of our New York ministers, and those of any couples whom they marry, are protected if that marriage is ever challenged, regardless of any civil mechanisms that New York has developed to allow people to officiate.

G. MARTIN FREEMAN
SEATTLE

The writer is the presiding chaplain at the Universal Life Church.

A Debt Deal Idea

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "Republicans in Swing Districts Stuck in Middle of Debt Debate" (front page, May 12):

Speaker Kevin McCarthy is playing a dangerous game of brinkmanship in the debt limit fight by attaching fiscal responsibility conditions to the full faith and credit of the United States.

President Biden should not be afraid to negotiate, too, for something that he and many in the G.O.P. can agree on: common-sense firearms regulation. If the White House and G.O.P. lawmakers in competitive suburban seats can tie spending cuts to legislation cutting gun violence, we can avoid catastrophes on Wall Street and Main Street.

TED GROZIER, SHELBURNE, VT.

Helping Sherpas

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "'I See No Future': Sherpas Abandon Jobs They Made Famous" (news article, May 7):

It is very unfortunate that hobby climbers from rich countries go on climbing trips to Mount Everest with Sherpas dragging them to the summit, but these same Sherpas have a very inadequate safety net and barely make enough to survive.

Nepal should insist that all foreign expeditions buy adequate life insurance for the Sherpas for the sake of their families, given the risk of their profession, and they should also impose minimum pay requirements to make it a worthwhile profession to pursue.

RAM KELKAR, CHICAGO

A Cancer Surgeon and Patient Is Biden's Choice to Lead N.I.H.

By SHERYL GAY STOLBERG

WASHINGTON — President Biden announced on Monday that he would nominate Dr. Monica M. Bertagnolli, a cancer surgeon who became the director of the National Cancer Institute in October, to be the next director of the National Institutes of Health, filling a position that has been vacant for more than a year.

Dr. Bertagnolli is also a cancer patient. She announced late last year that she had received a diagnosis of early breast cancer.

In a statement, Mr. Biden called her a "world-class physician-scientist" who had "spent her career pioneering scientific discovery and pushing the boundaries of what is possible to improve cancer prevention and treatment for patients, and ensuring that patients in every community have access to quality care."

Dr. Bertagnolli, 64, will need to be confirmed by the Senate. She is the first female director of the National Cancer Institute, which is part of the National Institutes of Health. She would be only the second woman to lead the N.I.H. on a permanent basis.

For Mr. Biden, cancer research is deeply personal. His elder son, Beau Biden, died of brain cancer in 2015 at age 46. Last year, the president set a goal of reducing the death rate from cancer by at least 50 percent over the next 25 years — part of an effort, he said then, to "supercharge" the cancer "moonshot" program he initiated and presided over when he was vice president.



POOL PHOTO BY JEFF CHIU

Dr. Monica M. Bertagnolli was a surgical oncologist before becoming the first woman to lead the National Cancer Institute.

On Monday, Mr. Biden praised Dr. Bertagnolli for advancing that initiative and for her efforts to promote research on childhood cancers and programs to expand access to cancer clinical trials.

The announcement of her selection was not a surprise; a number of news organizations, including The New York Times, reported last month that the president planned to nominate Dr. Bertagnolli. It is not clear why there was a delay.

Fighting cancer is also personal for Dr. Bertagnolli. In mid-December, she announced her diagnosis and said she was "thankful to be receiving excellent care" at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, where she had worked as a surgical oncologist before taking the helm of the National Cancer Institute.

She said then that her prognosis was good and that she had enrolled in a clinical trial. In an interview with NPR in February, she said she was still in treatment.

"I went in for my regular mammogram expecting it to be negative like all the others and got a nasty surprise," she said. "And so now I know what it feels like." She added: "First thing I asked my doctors was, is there anything available for me? And there was a study available for me, and I signed on."

Only one woman, Dr. Bernadine P. Healy, an appointee of President George H.W. Bush, has led the National Institutes of Health on a permanent basis. Dr. Ruth Kirschstein, a longtime federal scientist and N.I.H. administrator, did two stints as the agency's acting director.

If confirmed, Dr. Bertagnolli would replace Dr. Lawrence A. Tabak, who has led the agency in an acting capacity since its last permanent director, Dr. Francis S. Collins, left his post in December 2021. Dr. Collins, an appointee of President Barack Obama, served in that job for more than 12 years.

As N.I.H. director, Dr. Bertagnolli would lead one of the world's premier research agencies, a collection of 27 institutes and centers focusing on cancer, infectious disease, heart and lung ailments, mental health and drug abuse, among other medical matters. With an annual budget of more than $47 billion, the N.I.H. funds research around the world.

A daughter of Italian and French Basque immigrants, Dr. Bertagnolli grew up on a ranch in southwestern Wyoming, studied engineering as an undergraduate at Princeton University and attended medical school at the University of Utah. Before joining the federal government, she was a professor of surgery specializing in surgical oncology at Harvard Medical School.

A Haven of Cigars and Laughs Seeks a Savior as Foreclosure Looms

From Page A1

identifiable liquid waste," according to court papers. The club said it has "improved the conditions of the property" since that inspection. Still, the Frank Sinatra Room, once a place of fine dining, remained a scene of unfinished renovations with light bulbs hanging from the ceiling during a recent visit.

Long a stomping ground for Manhattan's showbiz elite, the club has seen its membership age and dwindle and its dues revenue diminish as it faced a series of crises. In 2017, federal agents raided its offices as part of an inquiry into its finances. The authorities later charged its executive director at the time for filing false personal tax returns. In 2020 came flooding that shut the club down, only to be followed by the pandemic. Last year there was enough financial strain that, after the club's typical summer hiatus, it never resumed regular hours.

Now, its remaining leaders are searching for an 11th-hour savior who might buy the building and cover its debt. Arthur Aidala, the club's current dean (i.e., its president), said there were several promising offers, each about $18 million, that he believed would salvage the Friars' identity and allow the club to stay in the building, but would put the operations under new management.

"If it's one thing I've learned, the Friars should not be running clubs," Mr. Aidala said. "They should be telling jokes and singing songs."

Mr. Aidala, a criminal defense lawyer whose clients have included Harvey Weinstein, Rudy Giuliani and Alan Dershowitz, spoke from the second-floor dining room of the club, also known as The Monastery, in which the marble floors, ornate ceilings, stained glass and hand-carved wood combine in a style that is something like Vegas Medieval. Mr. Aidala said he viewed the loan company's contention that the property was "abandoned" as disingenuous because the building had been long in the process of rehabilitation, including when the club secured the loan in 2021.

As of now, the Friars Club's funds have been depleted and about two months' worth of mortgage payments remain unpaid, Mr. Aidala said, but he promised that after the building is sold, "We're going to pay them 100 cents on the dollar."

Beyond its celebrity roasts, its line-crossing comedy and a membership that included Johnny Carson, Irving Berlin, Jimmy Fallon and Carol Burnett, the club has been home to many non-entertainers who cherished the bonhomie of its social settings and a certain proximity to fame. (It's always been mostly men; the first woman admitted was Liza Minnelli in 1988.) Its headquarters since the 1950s, the Monastery is a shrine to the club's heyday, with framed black-and-white photos of smiling comedy legends.



HIROKO MASUIKE/THE NEW YORK TIMES



TONY PALMIERI/WWD AND PENSKE MEDIA, VIA GETTY IMAGES

The Friars Club was beloved by entertainers and fans alike. The club has struggled financially in recent years, and a loan company has moved to foreclose on it. Left, Milton Berle, third from left, with Frank Sinatra, fourth from left, who has a room named after him at the Friars Club.

But over the past decade or so, the fabric of the organization has frayed. The club, a nonprofit corporation, lost its tax-exempt status in 2010. Its spending on low-net charity events was criticized. Its bills piled up. Its director at the time, Michael Gyure, pleaded guilty to having filed false tax returns. He was kept on for several months after his sentencing, before the club's board fired him in 2020, an event for which he has brought legal action against the club. The lender said in court papers that the club also owes money to the restaurant and bartenders employee union, the city's Environmental Control Board, and the New York State Department of Labor.

After shutting down because of the flood and the pandemic, the club inched back to life in 2021, at first offering limited food such as charcuterie boards in place of full lunch and dinner service. At the beginning of 2022, there were a couple hundred dues-paying members — a paltry head count compared to around 2015, when paying membership numbered more than 1,000, said Anthony Trombetta, a former general manager and creative director for the club.

Club leaders had hoped that a roast of Tracy Morgan in spring of last year would reinvigorate the organization, Mr. Trombetta said, but after the club closed for part of the summer, as usual, it was not financially stable enough to fully reopen in September.

"After the summer, after the members were back from the Hamptons, our inability to open at that time put everyone on edge," Mr. Trombetta said. "Everyone was able to assume the club's fate at that time."

Then, last month, the club was sued by its creditor, which said in court papers that the organization had missed a monthly payment of about $140,000. The loan company, Kairos Credit Strategies Operating Partnership, demanded $13.5 million from the club and asked that a judge allow a company to manage and ultimately sell the club to the highest bidder.

Mr. Aidala has been searching for a buyer who will wipe out the debt and get the club up and running again. One bid — for a less-than-desired $6 million — has come from John Catsimatidis, the owner of WABC radio who made his fortune in grocery stores.

"I don't want the Friars Club name to die," said Mr. Catsimatidis, a former member.

Mr. Aidala said a promising offer in discussion involves Charlie Palmer, the chef whose company operates several restaurants across the country, including in Times Square. Under that deal, Mr. Palmer would operate a public restaurant on the first floor of the club, keeping the rest of the building for members.

But the club's plan would become more complicated if the judge handling the foreclosure filing approves the lender's effort to get a third-party property manager to oversee the building. And some former members are skeptical that, even if a rescue bidder steps in, the club will be able to lure back enough of the old guard to keep the place operating.

"There have been various attempts to revive, renew, reimagine the club," said Steve Beninati, a former member. "Whether you look at it from a financial perspective or from a more emotional perspective, none of them have ever worked."

But Marvin Scott, a senior correspondent for PIX11 News in New York and the club's "prior" (i.e., vice president), said things are not so dire. He said he likes to imagine the club as being like Jack and Rose in the film "Titanic," holding onto the railing as the ship sinks.

But the ending is different for the S.S. Friars Club, he predicted. In this story, he said, "We're not going to hit the water."

Tony Awards Broadcast Can Proceed After Striking Writers' Union Agrees

By MICHAEL PAULSON and JOHN KOBLIN

This year's Tony Awards ceremony, which had been in doubt since Hollywood's screenwriters went on strike earlier this month, will proceed as scheduled in an altered form after the writers' union said Monday night that it would not picket the show.

"As they have stood by us, we stand with our fellow workers on Broadway who are impacted by our strike," the Writers Guild of America, which represents screenwriters, said in a statement late Monday.

The union made it clear that the broadcast, which is scheduled to air on CBS on June 11, would be different from past ceremonies. But the union did not detail what those differences would be, and the Tony Awards administrators did not have any immediate comment. It is expected that the broadcast will still feature awards honoring the best plays and musicals of the 2022-23 Broadway season, but it is not clear how musical numbers, which are a key marketing opportunity for many shows, will be affected.

"Tony Awards Productions (a joint venture of the Broadway League and the American Theater Wing) has communicated with us that they are altering this year's show to conform with specific requests from the W.G.A., and therefore the W.G.A. will not be picketing the show," the union said in a statement. "Responsibility for having to make changes to the format of the 2023 Tony Awards rests squarely on the shoulders of Paramount/CBS and their allies. They continue to refuse to negotiate a fair contract for the writers represented by the W.G.A."

Though the Tony Awards is not a big ratings draw compared to other awards shows, the televised ceremony is a critical marketing opportunity for the theater industry, which is still drawing audiences well below prepandemic figures.

Corrections

FRONT PAGE

An article on Monday about Jordan Neely and Daniel Penny's lives before Mr. Neely's killing on the subway misstated the date of Mr. Neely's last encounter with subway outreach workers. They observed him on April 8, not the week after that.

INTERNATIONAL

Because of an editing error, an article on Sunday about Sweden winning the 2023 Eurovision Song Contest misidentified the creators of the song "You'll Never Walk Alone." The original version was by Rodgers and Hammerstein for the musical "Carousel," not by Gerry and the Pacemakers.

NATIONAL

A picture caption with an article on Sunday about the first U.S. military base named in honor of a spouse misstated where Greg Moore was looking at family photo albums. It was Auburn, Ala., not Auburn, Ga.

SPORTS

An article on Friday about Luis Arraez of the Miami Marlins misstated the number of games in the 1902 season and how that affected Nap Lajoie's argument for a batting title. His teams played 136 games, not 154, meaning he did clear the 60 percent threshold that is sometimes used to establish a player's qualification for the batting title.

WEEKEND ARTS

A film review on Friday about the Yogi Berra documentary "It Ain't Over" referred incorrectly to the origin of the quotation: "It ain't over till it's over." By most accounts, it is attributed to the baseball player Yogi Berra.

OBITUARIES

An obituary on Thursday about John Roland, the longtime anchor of the 10 p.m. newscast on Fox's flagship television station, misspelled the surname of a former news director there. He is Ted Kavanau, not Kavanagh.

An obituary on Thursday about the Brazilian singer Rita Lee referred incorrectly to her father, Charles Jones. While he was descended from Confederates, he was born in Brazil, not the United States.

An obituary on May 8 about the former Oakland Athletics pitching star Vida Blue misstated his status in the 1971 season. Although it was his first full season in the major leagues, it was technically not his rookie year. (He had pitched enough innings in brief stints with the Athletics in 1969 and 1970 to render him ineligible for rookie status.)

Contact the Newsroom

To contact the newsroom regarding correction requests, please email corrections@nytimes.com.

Errors are corrected during the press run whenever possible, so some errors noted here may not have appeared in all editions.

Alzheimer's Was Delayed By Mutation, Study Finds

By GINA KOLATA

The man should have gotten Alzheimer's disease in his early 40s — he had a gene mutation that guaranteed it, or so it seemed. Scans of his brain even revealed severe atrophying and the hallmarks of the disease: rough, hard, amyloid plaques and spaghetti-like tangles of tau proteins. But the fatal brain disease did not appear until the man was 67.

Now an intense research effort has discovered why. The man was protected because another mutation in a different gene blocked the disease from entering his entorhinal cortex. That tiny area of the brain is a hub for neurons involved in memory, recognition of objects, navigation and time perception. And it is there that scientists believe that Alzheimer's disease begins.

A paper on the finding was published Monday in the journal Nature Medicine.

Why it matters: A potential path to treatment.

More than six million people in the United States have Alzheimer's, a disease that has been notoriously difficult to treat. Yet here was a man with a mutation that causes the most severe and rapidly progressing form of Alzheimer's. And his disease was delayed for two decades. If a drug could do what the mutation did, resulting in most people getting Alzheimer's very late in life, the outcome could be transformative.

"This really holds the secret to the next generation of therapeutics," said Dr. Joseph F. Arboleda-Velasquez, a cell biologist at Massachusetts Eye and Ear in Boston and a member of the research team. Dr. Arboleda-Velasquez is a co-founder of a biotechnology company looking to produce drugs that could act on this research.

A drug that delays the disease by two decades is not out of the question, said Dr. Diego Sepulveda-Falla, a neuropathologist at the University of Hamburg in Germany and a member of the research team. The mutation results in a potent version of a protein, Reelin, in the entorhinal cortex. That super-potent Reelin ultimately prevents tangled strands of tau proteins from sticking together and forming the structures that are a characteristic of Alzheimer's.

The idea is to "go in with a syringe and treat only one area" of the brain, he said.

But that sort of treatment is off in the future and may not be possible, cautioned Dr. Thomas Bird, emeritus professor of neurology and clinical genetics at the University of Washington. Dr. Bird was not involved in the study.

The entorhinal cortex is a very small area. "We don't know what sort of damage it might do, sticking needles in and dropping in chemicals," he said.

Background: A new take from ongoing research.

The man with what the researchers are calling "resilience" to Alzheimer's was part of a decades-long study of 6,000 people living in Colombia who have a gene mutation that causes Alzheimer's in middle age. Many have agreed to genetic testing, brain scans and, after they die, brain autopsies.

A few years ago, the same research group in the current study identified a woman who also was protected from Alzheimer's. But in her case, resilience was caused by a mutation in a different gene, APOE. Instead of lacking clumps of tau in one small region of her brain, they were missing in her entire brain.

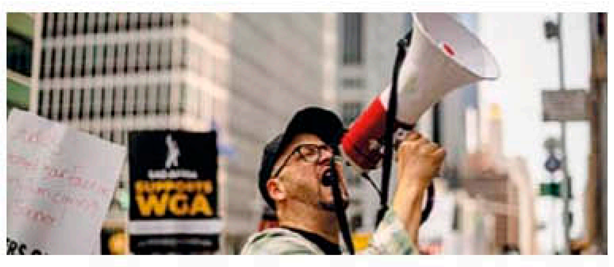
But, the researchers say, they think the two patients are revealing a new pathway to treat Alzheimer's. The two genes that are mutated interrupt a molecular cascade of events needed for tau to aggregate in the brain.

What's next: Additional research and combined treatments.

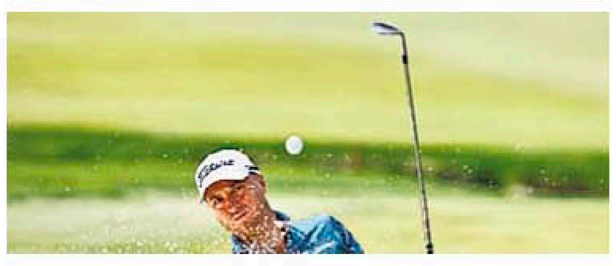
The hypothesis that a drug could protect other patients' entorhinal cortexes requires more research. But animal studies are already underway, Dr. Arboleda-Velasquez said. Members of the group are injecting the mutant form of Reelin into the same part of the brain in mice that are predisposed to an Alzheimer's-like disease to see if it is protective.

The future may involve a combination of therapies, said Dr. Eric Reiman, a member of the research team, executive director of Banner Alzheimer's Institute in Phoenix and a paid adviser to a number of drug companies. The hope is to prevent the buildup of amyloid and tau and to delay Alzheimer's in those susceptible for so long that it is no longer an issue.

4 POLICY
The Internal Revenue Service said Black taxpayers have been far more likely to be audited than others.



4 LABOR
Striking members of the Writers Guild of America are protesting television's annual showcase for advertisers.



8 SPORTS
Justin Thomas is back at the P.G.A. Championship as the defending champion but not with much momentum.

Business
The New York Times

TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2023 B1

N

Online Shopping Comes to Life

Companies are trying different strategies to make 'live shopping' retail's next big thing.



GILI BENITA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Amazon has enlisted influencers like Paige DeSorbo, above, to sell products in highly produced live segments. It has also recruited celebrities like Kevin Hart to promote its Amazon Live platform.

By JORDYN HOLMAN and KALLEY HUANG

On a warm spring evening in New York, dozens of people gathered on a rooftop in Midtown Manhattan to sip fruity cocktails and chat. Shortly after the happy hour began, a woman stepped away from the crowd and went to work.

Standing between a backdrop of fake greenery and an iPhone attached to a ring light, she put on an auctioneer's voice and implored her audience to buy a used sweater.

"Let's get this to $67, you guys," Iva Lazovic said, smiling and stepping toward the camera. "This is so cute. It's Lululemon. You are never getting it lower than this at the store. Let's be real. Posh has the steals and deals."

Ms. Lazovic was one of several women at the event who hopped in front of the phone to sell their wares on Posh Shows, Poshmark's new livestreaming platform, the first significant business strategy the company has unveiled since the South Korean juggernaut Naver acquired it last fall.

Poshmark is one of many companies racing to break into the

CONTINUED ON PAGE B5

Once Soaring, Vice Media Now Faces Bankruptcy

A cautionary tale in the raucous development of digital publishing.

By LAUREN HIRSCH and BENJAMIN MULLIN

Vice Media filed for bankruptcy on Monday, punctuating a years-long descent from a new-media darling to a cautionary tale of the problems facing the digital publishing industry.

The bankruptcy will not interrupt daily operations for Vice's businesses, which in addition to its flagship website include the ad agency Virtue, the Pulse Films division and Refinery29, a women-focused site acquired by Vice in 2019.

A group of Vice's lenders, including Fortress Investment Group and Soros Fund Management, is in the leading position to acquire the company out of bankruptcy. The group has submitted a bid of $225 million, which would be covered by its existing loans to the company. It would also take over "significant liabilities" from Vice after any deal closes.

A sale process follows next. The lenders have secured a $20 million loan to continue operating Vice and then, if a better bid does not emerge, the group that includes Fortress and Soros will acquire Vice.

Still, the dreams that Vice executives once had of a stock market debut or a sale at an eye-popping valuation have been wiped away. The company was considered to be worth $5.7 billion at one point.

Investments from media titans like Disney and shrewd financial investors like TPG, which spent hundreds of millions of dollars, will be rendered worthless by the bankruptcy, cementing Vice's status among the most notable bad bets in the media industry.

Like some of its peers in the digital-media industry, including BuzzFeed and Vox Media, Vice and its investors bet big on the rising power of social media networks like Facebook and Instagram, anticipating they would deliver a tide of young, upwardly mobile readers that advertisers craved.

Though readers came by the millions, new media companies had trouble wringing profits from them, and the bulk of digital ad dollars went to the major tech platforms. Last month, BuzzFeed shut down its namesake Pulitzer

CONTINUED ON PAGE B3

E.U. Clears Acquisition Of Activision

By ADAM SATARIANO

LONDON — Microsoft's faltering $69 billion bid to buy the video game company Activision Blizzard received a glimmer of hope on Monday when European Union regulators approved what would be the largest consumer tech deal in two decades.

E.U. officials said they would allow the deal after Microsoft, the maker of the Xbox console, made concessions to ensure that rival companies of new online gaming services would have continued access to titles developed by Activision, such as the hugely popular Call of Duty.

Even so, the blockbuster acquisition, which has become a test of whether regulators around the world will approve a tech megamerger amid concerns about the industry's power, still faces an uphill climb. American and British regulators have each moved to stop the acquisition in recent months, arguing that a combination of the Xbox maker with the company behind the Call of Duty franchise would hinder competition. Microsoft is fighting both actions.

The deal has revealed fractures

CONTINUED ON PAGE B3

Fed Ties to S.V.B. Chief Attract Scrutiny to Century-Old Setup

Questions about the way the central bank has been organized.

By JEANNA SMIALEK

The collapse of Silicon Valley Bank has drawn attention to the relationship between the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, which was in charge of overseeing safety and soundness at the lender, and the bank's former chief executive, Greg Becker, who for years sat on the San Francisco Fed's board of directors.

The bank's collapse on March 10 has prompted criticism of the Fed, whose bank supervisors were slow to spot and stop problems before Silicon Valley Bank experienced a devastating run that necessitated a sweeping government response.

Now, Mr. Becker could face lawmaker questions about his board role — and whether it created too close a link between the bank and its regulators — when he testifies on Tuesday before the Senate Banking Committee about Silicon Valley Bank's collapse.

In prepared testimony published before the hearing, Mr. Becker said he was "truly sorry" for the bank's failure. "I do not believe that any bank could survive a bank run of that velocity and magnitude," he said.

Mr. Becker's position on the San Francisco Fed board would have given him little formal power, according to current and former Fed employees and officials. The Fed's 12 reserve banks — semiprivate institutions dotted across the country — each has a nine-person board of directors, three of whom come from the banking industry. Those boards have no say in bank supervision, and serve mainly as advisers for the Fed bank's leadership.

But many acknowledged that the setup created the appearance of coziness between S.V.B. and the Fed. Some outside experts and po-

CONTINUED ON PAGE B4

The Digest

LITIGATION

Appeals Court Says Musk Must Abide by Tweet Rule

Elon Musk cannot back out of a settlement with securities regulators that was reached after his 2018 tweets claiming he had secured funding to take Tesla private caused the electric vehicle maker's share price to jump and led to a temporary halt in trading, an appeals court ruled Monday.

The summary order by the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan was released just days after a three-judge panel heard lawyers' arguments in the case.

Mr. Musk had challenged a lower court judge's ruling last year requiring him to abide by the deal arguing circumstances had changed and because the decree contains a "prior restraint" that violates the First Amendment.

The settlement with the Securities and Exchange Commission required that his tweets be approved first by a Tesla attorney. It also called for Mr. Musk and Tesla to pay civil fines over the tweets in which he said he had "funding secured" to take Tesla private at $420 per share. *ASSOCIATED PRESS*

AUTOMOTIVE

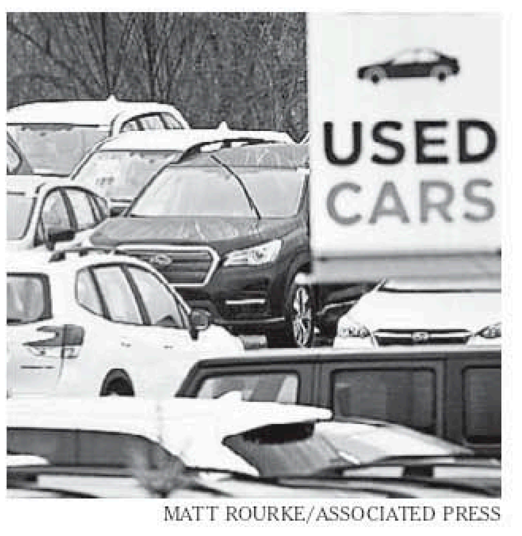
Americans Are Keeping Cars Longer Than Ever

With new and used cars still painfully expensive, Ryan Holdsworth says he plans to keep his nine-year-old Chevy Cruze for at least four more years.

A 35-year-old grocery store worker from Grand Rapids, Mich., Mr. Holdsworth would probably be in the market for a vehicle within a few years — if not for the high cost. For now, it's out of the question.

"You're not going to get one for a price you can afford," he said.

Mr. Holdsworth has plenty of company. Americans are keeping their cars longer than ever. The average age of a passenger vehicle on the road hit a record 12.5 years this year, according to data gathered by S&P Global Mobility.



MATT ROURKE/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Blame it mainly on the pandemic, which in 2020 triggered a global shortage of automotive computer chips. Since three years ago, the average new vehicle has rocketed 24 percent to nearly $48,000 as of April, according to Edmunds.com. Typical loan rates on new-car purchases have ballooned to 7 percent. *ASSOCIATED PRESS*

BANKING

Leading Hedge Fund Sells Bank Shares Amid Turmoil

Bridgewater Associates, one of the world's largest hedge funds, sold off U.S. bank stocks in the first quarter as the industry was roiled by the collapse of three lenders, according to regulatory filings.

The firm, founded by the billionaire Ray Dalio, cut its holdings to zero in five U.S. banking giants: JPMorgan, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley. It also roughly halved its exposure to Citigroup, the filings showed.

The positions were revealed in quarterly securities filings known as 13-fs. While backward-looking, these snapshots show what funds owned on the last day of the quarter. They may not reflect current holdings.

Global hedge funds cut their exposure to U.S. bank stocks to a near 10-year low in March and fled lending-sensitive shares amid industry turmoil after the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank. *REUTERS*

S&P 500 INDEX
+0.3%
4,136.28

DOW JONES INDUSTRIALS
+0.1%
33,348.6

NASDAQ COMPOSITE INDEX
+0.7%
12,365.21

10-YEAR TREASURY YIELD
3.50%
+0.041 points

CRUDE OIL (U.S.)
$71.11
+$1.07

GOLD (N.Y.)
$2,022.70
+$2.90

In a Quiet Market, Shares Rise Slightly

By The Associated Press

Wall Street ticked higher on Monday ahead of reports that will show how much a slowing economy is hurting U.S. household spending, which has been helping to prevent a recession.

STOCKS & BONDS

The S&P 500 rose 12.20, or 0.3 percent, to 4,136.28, the latest scant increase in what has been a listless weekslong run for the market. The Dow Jones industrial average added 47.98, or 0.1 percent, to 33,348.6, and the Nasdaq composite climbed 80.47, or 0.7 percent, to 12,365.21.

Some of the sharper moves came from companies announcing takeovers of rivals, including a 9.1 percent drop for the energy company Oneok after it said it was buying Magellan Midstream Partners. Magellan jumped 13 percent. But the larger market was relatively quiet as several concerns continued to drag on Wall Street.

Chief among them was the fear of a recession hitting later this year, in large part because of high interest rates meant to knock down inflation. But concerns were also rising about cracks in the U.S. banking system and the possibility that the U.S. government could be inching toward a default on its debt, which economists warn would be catastrophic, as soon as June 1.

So far, a resilient job market has helped U.S. households keep up their spending despite all the pressures. That in turn has been a powerful pillar propping up the economy.

On Tuesday, the government is scheduled to detail how much sales at retailers across the country grew last month.

Several big retailers will also announce how much profit they made individually during the first three months of the year, including Home Depot on Tuesday, Target on Wednesday and Walmart on Thursday.

They are among the few companies that have yet to report their results for the start of the year. The majority of companies in the S&P 500 have topped expectations so far, though the bar had been set particularly low.

The S&P 500 Index

Position of the S&P 500 index at 1-minute intervals on Monday

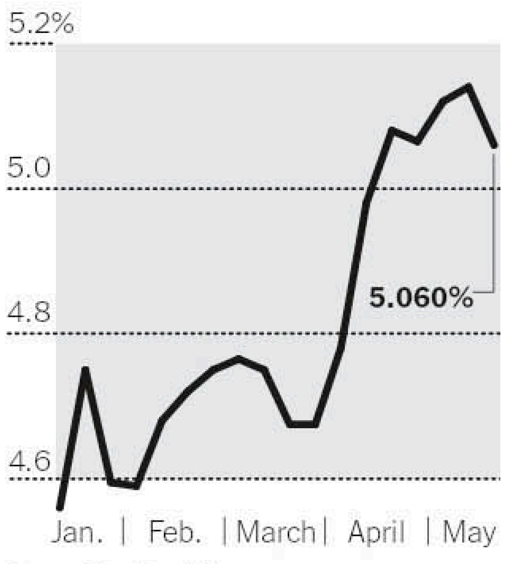
-- Previous Close: 4,124.08



Source: FactSet THE NEW YORK TIMES

3-Month Treasury Bills

High rate at weekly auction.



Source: The Bond Buyer THE NEW YORK TIMES

S&P 500 companies are still on track to report a drop of 2.5 percent in earnings per share from a year earlier. That would be the second straight quarter in which profit has dropped, according to FactSet.

"These are backward-looking numbers, so it's something we take with some value, but we're more interested in what they're saying going forward," said Megan Horneman, chief investment officer at Verdence Capital Advisors.

On that subject, Ms. Horneman said she had been hearing many C.E.O.s talk about pressures on profitability and worries about a weakening economy.

"We still think a recession is likely at some point this year," she said, pointing to the latest discouraging report about manufacturing on Monday. A survey of manufacturers in New York state plunged by much more than economists expected.

"It was pretty dismal, to say the least," Ms. Horneman said.

As earnings reports slide out of the spotlight, the U.S. government's debt ceiling negotiations are shoving in. The federal government is risking its first default if Congress does not raise the credit limit set for federal borrowing.

Most of Wall Street expects Democrats and Republicans to come to a deal, simply because the alternative would be so disastrous for both sides. U.S. Treasuries form the bedrock of the global financial system because they are seen as the safest investment on the planet.

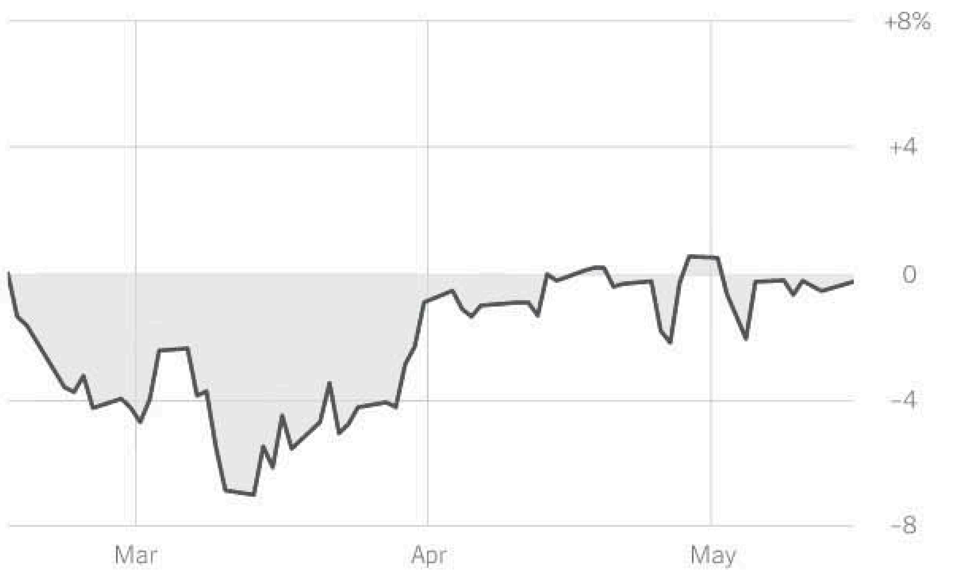
But one worry is that politicians may not feel much urgency to reach an agreement until financial markets shake sharply enough to convince them of the importance of a resolution.

"A debt default may not be the most likely scenario, but any prolonged debate or unexpected development has the potential to trigger higher volatility," said Chris Larkin, managing director, trading and investing, at E-Trade from Morgan Stanley.

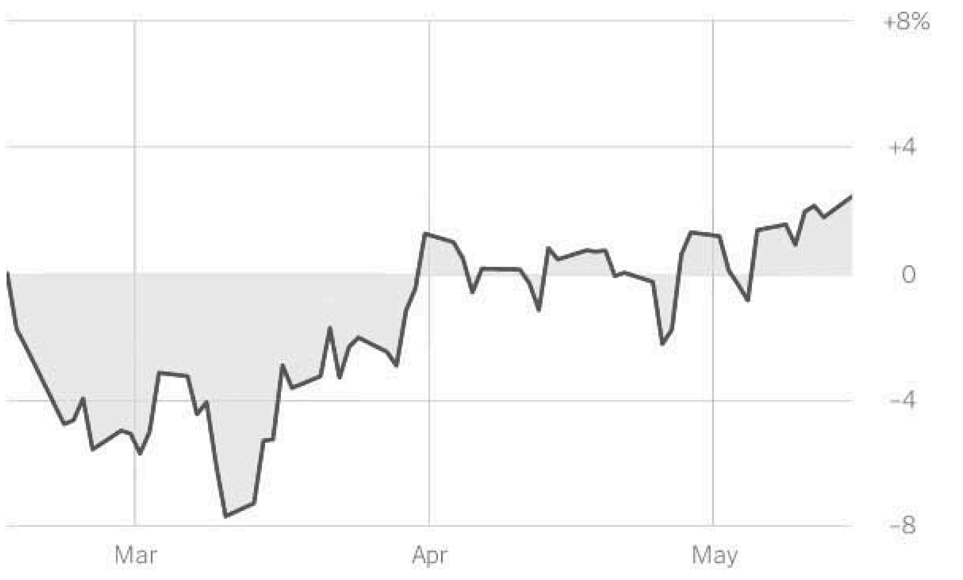
What Happened in Stock Markets Yesterday

POWERED BY FACTSET

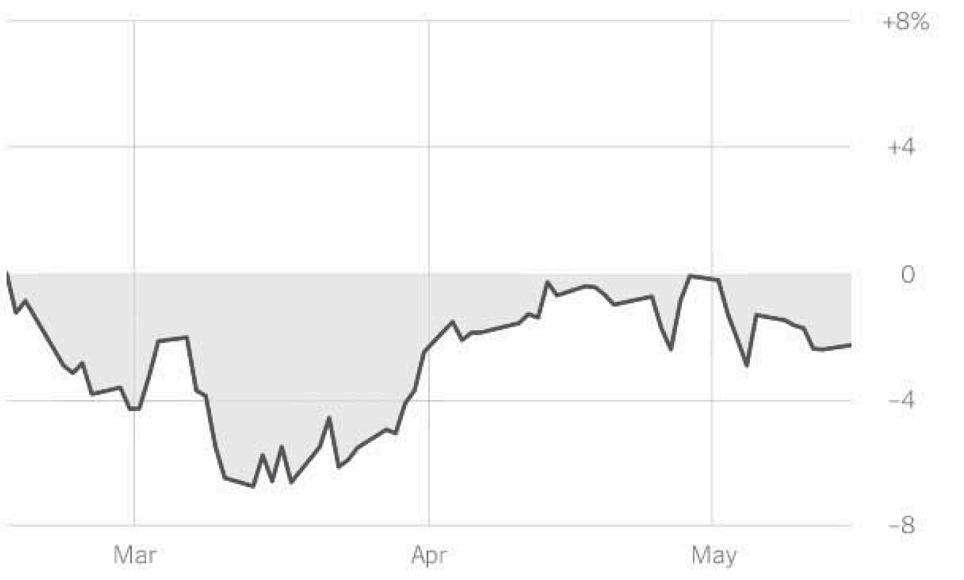
S&P 500 4,136.28 ↑+0.3%
3 month performance: **−0.3%**



Nasdaq Composite Index 12,365.21 ↑+0.7%
3 month performance: **+2.4%**



Dow Jones Industrials 33,348.60 ↑+0.1%
3 month performance: **−2.3%**



Best performers

S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE
1. Western Digital (WDC)	$36.75	+11.3%
2. Zions Bancorp. (ZION)	$24.33	+8.5
3. Comerica (CMA)	$34.30	+7.3
4. Keycorp (KEY)	$9.59	+6.7
5. Dish Network Co. (DISH)	$6.57	+6.7
6. Micron Technology (MU)	$64.64	+6.1
7. Seagate Technology Hldgs. (STX)	$61.06	+6.1
8. Paramount Global 'B' (PARA)	$15.81	+5.3
9. Match Group (MTCH)	$32.44	+5.1
10. EQT Corp (EQT)	$35.14	+5.1

Worst performers

S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE
1. ONEOK (OKE)	$57.95	−9.1%
2. First Solar (FSLR)	$221.59	−4.4
3. Tractor Supply (TSCO)	$231.53	−3.5
4. Ameren Corp (AEE)	$85.06	−3.0
5. Insulet Corp. (PODD)	$320.79	−2.9
6. American Tower (AMT)	$195.46	−2.4
7. Crown Castle (CCI)	$113.90	−2.4
8. Exelon (EXC)	$40.76	−2.4
9. Arch Capital Group (ACGL)	$75.10	−2.3
10. Interpublic Group of Comp (IPG)	$35.95	−2.2

Most active

S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE	VOLUME IN MIL.
1. Tesla (TSLA)	$166.35	−1.0%	105
2. Ford Motor (F)	$11.64	−0.3	53
3. Amazon.com (AMZN)	$111.20	+0.9	53
4. Advanced Micro Devices (AMD)	$97.40	+2.2	51
5. Bank of America (BAC)	$27.65	+2.1	38
6. Apple (AAPL)	$172.07	−0.3	37
7. Alphabet A (GOOGL)	$116.51	−0.9	36
8. NVIDIA (NVDA)	$289.53	+2.2	29
9. Intel Corp (INTC)	$29.80	+2.9	29
10. AT&T Inc. (T)	$16.95	−0.5	29

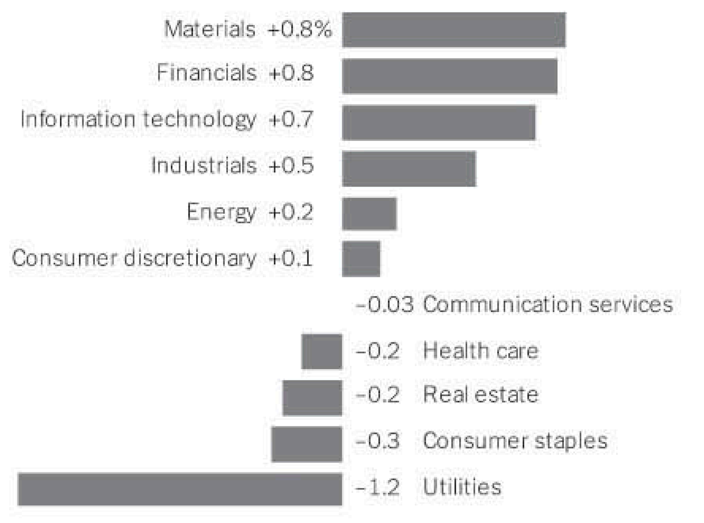
Municipal bonds

	TOTAL RETURN 1 YR	TOTAL RETURN 5 YRS	TOTAL ASSETS IN BIL.
1. Vanguard Intermediate-Term Tax-Exempt Fund Admiral Shares (VWIUX)	+3.3%	+2.2%	70.0
2. Vanguard Limited-Term Tax-Exempt Fund (VMLTX)	+2.5	+1.5	31.0
3. Vanguard Tax-Exempt Bond Index Fund Admiral Shares (VTEAX)	+2.8	+2.0	29.0
4. American Funds Tax Exempt Bond Fund Class F-3 (TFEBX)	+2.0	+2.0	22.1
5. Vanguard Ultra Short-Term Tax-Exempt Fund (VWSTX)	+2.0	+1.2	18.2
6. Vanguard California Intermediate-Term Tax-Exempt Fund Investor Shares (VCAIX)	+3.7	+1.9	15.1
7. Vanguard Long-Term Tax-Exempt Fund Admiral Shares (VWLUX)	+2.5	+2.3	14.7
8. Vanguard High-Yield Tax-Exempt Fund (VWAHX)	+1.4	+2.3	14.7
9. Franklin California Tax Free Income Fund Class C (FRCTX)	+1.4	+1.4	13.8
10. Strategic Advisers Municipal Bond Fund (FSMUX)	+1.8	0.0	13.0

Source: Morningstar

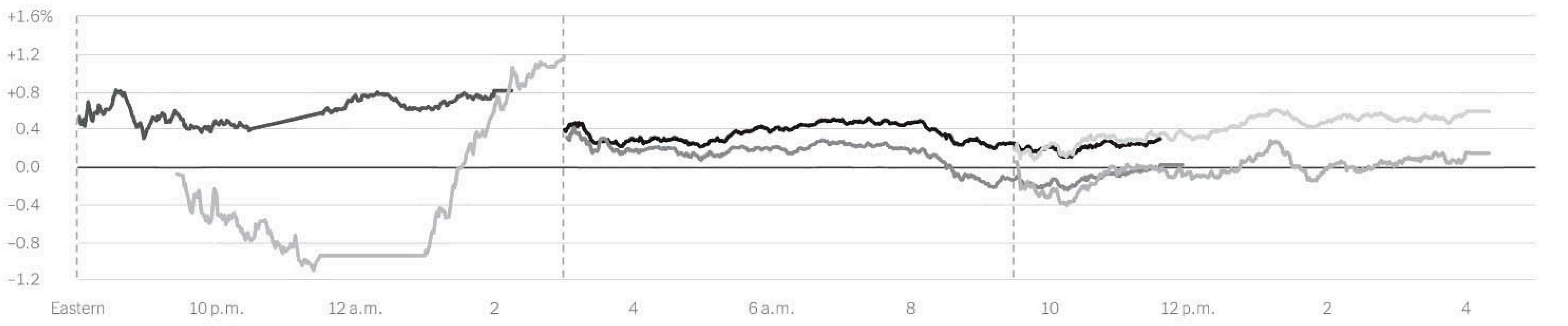
Sector performance

S&P 500 SECTORS



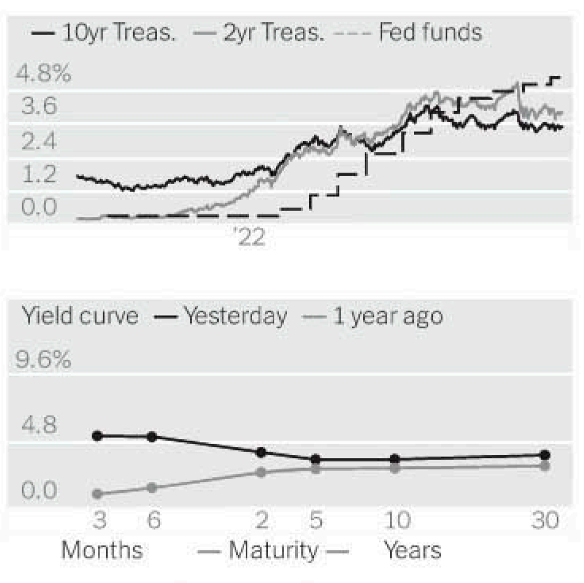
How stock markets fared yesterday in Asia ... ... in Europe ... and North America

Nikkei 225 (Japan): +0.8%
Shanghai Composite (Shanghai): +1.2%
FTSE 100 (London): +0.3%
DAX (Frankfurt): +0.0%
Dow Jones Industrials (New York): +0.1%
S&P/TSX (Toronto): +0.6%

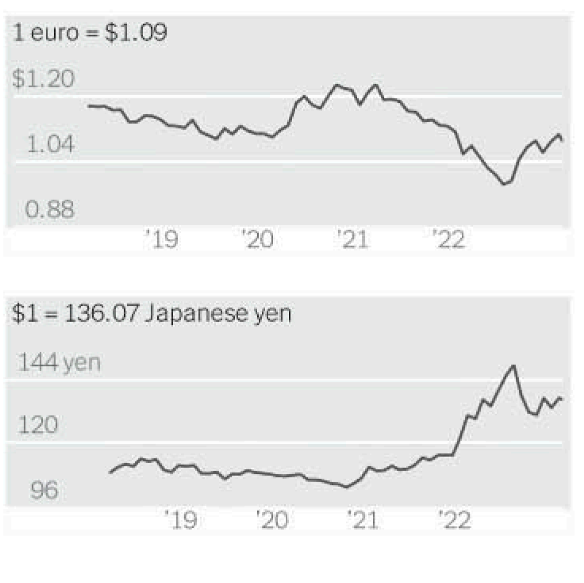


What Is Happening in Other Markets and the Economy

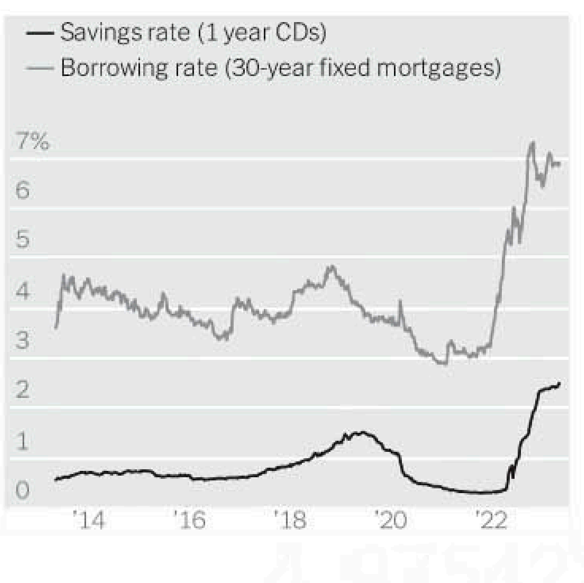
Bonds



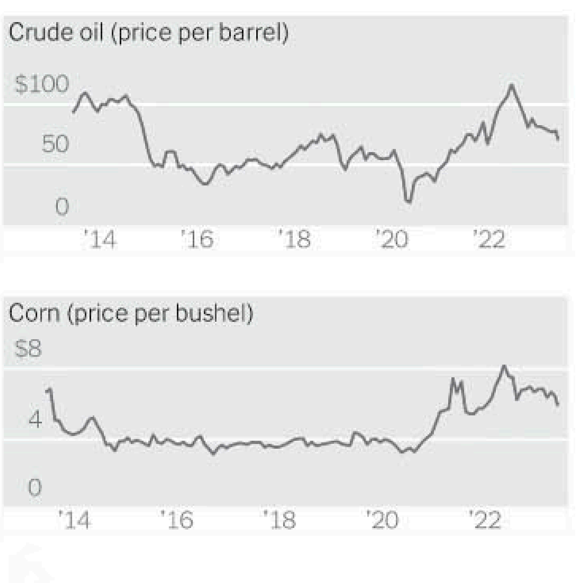
Currencies



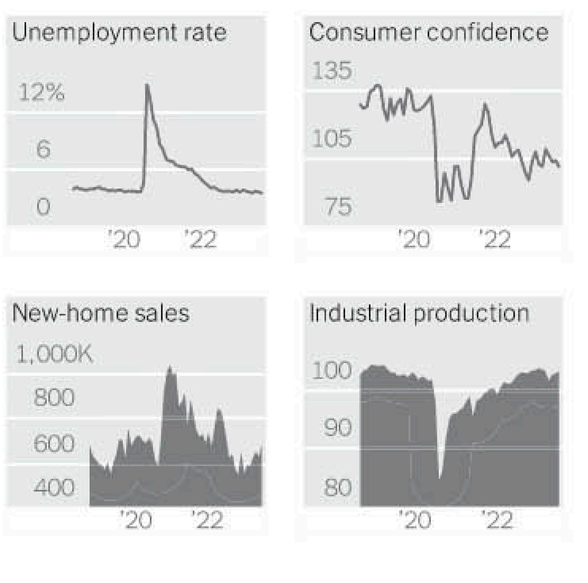
Consumer rates



Commodities



Economy



Microsoft Acquisition Of Activision Gains Backing of the E.U.

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

among regulators about how to crimp the power of the world's biggest technology companies.

Opposition to the acquisition has centered in part on so-called cloud gaming, a relatively new technology that lets people stream games on phones, tablets and other devices, potentially eliminating the need for hardware like consoles. American and British regulators said Microsoft's purchase of Activision would undercut this still-developing sector of the gaming industry before it had a chance to bloom. The European Commission, the executive body for the 27-nation bloc, gave its approval after Microsoft agreed to guarantee for 10 years that gamers would be able to play Activision titles on cloud gaming services being developed by other companies, such as Nvidia.

After negotiating the concessions with Microsoft, European Union officials said they concluded that the deal could go through, particularly because the cloud gaming market was still so small. Many Activision titles that are not currently playable on smaller cloud gaming services would now be available, providing a consumer boost for the new technology, the regulators said.

"These commitments fully address the competition concerns identified by the commission and represent a significant improvement for cloud game streaming compared to the current situation," the E.U. regulator said in a statement.

Microsoft said the concessions would benefit consumers.

> *'The European Commission has required Microsoft to license popular Activision Blizzard games automatically to competing cloud gaming services.'*
>
> Brad Smith, the president of Microsoft.

"The European Commission has required Microsoft to license popular Activision Blizzard games automatically to competing cloud gaming services," said Brad Smith, the president of Microsoft. "This will apply globally and will empower millions of consumers worldwide to play these games on any device they choose."

The European Commission said the deal would not harm the console market because Microsoft would not have an incentive to deny rivals, such as the Sony PlayStation, access to Activision titles without sacrificing profit. In the European Union, PlayStation has a much larger market share than Xbox.

The deal shows the difficulty of reaching a global consensus to regulate an evolving technology industry. While policymakers on both sides of the Atlantic have expressed concern about the growing power of the tech industry, differences remain about when and how to intervene.

The approval on Monday is a rare occasion where European regulators appear to be more accommodating than the United States. For years, European antitrust regulators, under Margrethe Vestager, have aggressively gone after big tech companies such as Google, issuing billions of dollars of fines and ordering changes to certain business practices. An E.U. new law taking effect by next year will add further competition oversight of the biggest tech firms.

But in this instance it is the United States taking the tougher position. Lina Khan, the chair of the Federal Trade Commission, has made the challenging of mergers a central part of her plan to rein in the tech giants. The F.T.C. sued to block Microsoft's purchase of Activision in December, arguing that the deal would harm consumers and lure gamers away from rivals. British regulators followed suit last month, rejecting the acquisition because of concerns about harming the cloud gaming market.

Sarah Cardell, the chief executive of Britain's antitrust regulator, the Competition and Markets Authority, said the decision reached by the European Commission gives Microsoft too much power to set the terms and conditions for the cloud gaming market for the next decade.

"While we recognize and respect that the European Commission is entitled to take a different view, the C.M.A. stands by its decision," Ms. Cardell said in a statement.

An F.T.C. spokesman declined to comment.

Approval in Brussels sets up a complicated legal chessboard for Microsoft and Activision, with few moves left to play. The fate of the deal will now hang largely on the legal process in the United States and Britain.

The two companies must show that the deal would not constrain competition, particularly if Microsoft would guarantee access to Activision titles. While American courts have shown they can be more open to overruling government antitrust initiatives, in Britain it is less common for verdicts by the Competition and Markets Authority to be reversed.

A loss in either country could be fatal for the deal because of the globalized and interconnected nature of the video game industry and the technology it uses.



SERGIO FLORES/BLOOMBERG

An Activision Blizzard tournament last year in San Antonio. Microsoft's deal to buy the video game maker has revealed fractures among regulators.

Vice Media, Once a High-Flying New-Media Darling, Is Filing for Bankruptcy

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

Prize-winning news division after going public at a small fraction of its earlier valuation, and Vox Media earlier this year raised money at roughly half its 2015 valuation.

"There are definitely commonalities in the hardships media organizations have been facing and Vice is no exception," said S. Mitra Kalita, the founder and publisher of Epicenter-NYC, a community journalism company based in Queens. "We now know that a brand tethered to social media for its growth and audience alone is not sustainable."

Bankruptcy records filed Monday show that Vice is made up of a web of companies associated with its various businesses, including Pulse Films and Carrot Creative, an ad agency. The filings say Vice has outstanding debt of $834 million, dwarfing the amount Vice was recently in talks to sell for.

They also show Vice owes some of its biggest business partners millions of dollars. The company said it owed Wipro, an information technology firm, nearly $10 million. Justin Stefano, one of the cofounders of Refinery29, is owed more than $500,000, according to the filings. And Davis Wright Tremaine, a law firm that has represented Vice, has a claim of more than $300,000.

The bankruptcy filing will give the company some relief from its onerous debt load as its lenders, including Fortress, seek to salvage their investments. Vice Media raised a $250 million loan from Fortress and Soros Fund Management in 2019 as it struggled to make a profit. It has been in default on that loan for months.

"It's the lender coming in and saying, 'I'm done funding the losses — if I'm going to fund the losses, I'm going to take control of the company,'" said Eric Snyder, chairman of bankruptcy at the law firm Wilk Auslander. "It's not unusual for the lender to come in and tell the debtor, the borrower, 'You're putting this into bankruptcy, you're going to make a motion to sell, we're going to put in a first bid.'"

Fortress sees a continuing role at Vice for Shane Smith, the brash co-founder who became synonymous with the company's gonzo journalism from exotic locales and oversaw a boundary-pushing culture that was rife with allegations of sexual harassment, according to a person familiar with the matter. Hozefa Lokhandwala and Bruce Dixon, co-chief executives at Vice, will also stay on.

According to the terms of Vice's bankruptcy loan, the company has 55 days to complete a sale. In documents filed with the bankruptcy court, Vice said that the timeline to sale, "while tight," is necessary "to best position the company to survive as a going concern."

In a statement, Mr. Dixon and Mr. Lokhandwala said that the bankruptcy sale would ultimately "strengthen the company."

"We look forward to completing the sale process in the next two to three months and charting a healthy and successful next chapter at Vice."

The bankruptcy is a moment of humility for Vice, which a decade ago appeared destined to sell for an eye-watering sum or make its debut on the public markets. In the 2010s, Vice raised piles of money from traditional media companies, which it had assailed for growing complacent. The company sold advertisers and investors on its ability to reach young millennials who were hungry for an alternative to its corporate rivals, delivering you-are-there dispatches from North Korea and Liberia without the decorum of the mainstream news media.

But the harsh realities of digital publishing caught up with Vice, and things went sideways. In 2017, the company raised $400 million from the private equity firm TPG in a deal code-named "Project Venus" that valued the company at $5.7 billion. But the cash infusion saddled Vice with financial obligations if it didn't hit aggressive profitability targets, and it eventually became an albatross for the company. Later that year, The New York Times and other outlets published investigations into allegations of sexual harassment at the company, kicking off a crisis at Vice that shook confidence in its management.

Mr. Smith replaced himself as chief executive of the company, appointing Nancy Dubuc — a longtime TV executive at A&E who shepherded hits like "Duck Dynasty" — to oversee the sprawling Brooklyn-based media empire. Investors hoped Ms. Dubuc would sell the company or take it public, and she made repeated attempts.

The latest took place this winter, a sales process that drew interest from several potential suitors. Antenna Group, a Greek media company that has done business with Vice before, expressed interest in acquiring it, but a deal never materialized. Ms. Dubuc left in February, with no buyer in sight and without achieving her long-stated goal of consistently turning a profit at Vice.

The situation got worse last month. The company laid off employees after Antenna stopped making payments to Vice for a production deal worth hundreds of millions of dollars. The cuts included employees at Vice World News, the company's global reporting initiative, after it became clear those efforts were no longer financially viable.

Alex Detrick, a spokesman for Antenna and the former chief communications officer for Vice under Mr. Smith, declined to comment.

Ms. Kalita of Epicenter-NYC, who also co-founded URL Media — a network of media outlets owned by Black and brown people that share content and advertising — said Vice's bankruptcy was a reminder to founders to develop many different kinds of businesses beyond just advertising.

"I think even those of us running profitable media start-ups now," Ms. Kalita said, "are thinking more carefully about growth and making sure we can continuously define our audience and the value we represent to them."



CRAIG BARRITT/GETTY IMAGES FOR VICE MEDIA

Shane Smith, left, with the former Vice C.E.O., Nancy Dubuc. Mr. Smith, a co-founder, will continue on as an adviser.

Hertz Apologizes After Denying Service to Puerto Rican Man

By CHRISTINE HAUSER

Hertz, the rental car chain, has apologized after an employee refused to give a Puerto Rican man his prepaid reserved car at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport because he presented a driver's license issued on the island instead of a passport.

The man, Humberto Marchand, recorded and described part of the incident at the Hertz counter in Kenner, La., and shared it on Twitter on May 10. It was widely viewed as others told similar stories of how Americans often fail to realize that people born in Puerto Rico, a U.S. commonwealth, are American citizens.

Mr. Marchand began recording while the interaction with the Hertz employee was already underway, and apparently after she had requested his passport instead of permitting him to use his driver's license, issued in Puerto Rico.

"It is a valid ID," Mr. Marchand says repeatedly, as he films. "It is a prepaid reservation."

"Would you like me to call the police?" the employee says.

"Yes, please call the police," he says. The woman takes a cellphone from her pocket and begins to speak, providing the location of the Hertz counter.

"Call the police. I am not doing anything illegal," Mr. Marchand says.

"Yes you are," she replies.

He says she is "denying a U.S. citizen" his reservation, which had been prepaid with his credit card.

"Do you know that my driver's license in Puerto Rico is as valid as a Louisiana driver's license?" he adds.

When asked on Monday about the incident, Hertz said in a statement that the employee had not followed policy. It said the company accepts Puerto Rican driver's licenses from customers renting in the United States, without requiring a passport.

"We sincerely regret that our policy was not followed and have apologized to Mr. Marchand and refunded his rental," the company said. "We are reinforcing our policies with employees to ensure that they are understood and followed consistently across our locations."

Mr. Marchand's story was picked up by national news organizations and Spanish-language media. In a widely shared interview with David Begnaud, a national correspondent for "CBS Mornings," Mr. Marchand said that the Kenner police officer who responded to the Hertz employee's call told Mr. Marchand that he would call "Border Patrol" if he did not leave the premises.

> *Employee asked for a passport despite American citizenship.*

Mr. Marchand, whose LinkedIn profile describes him as a former United States federal probation employee, could not be immediately reached on Monday. There was no response to emailed questions sent to the Kenner Police Department.

People born in Puerto Rico, a commonwealth of the United States, have the same birthright American citizenship as people born in the 50 states under Section 302 of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Its people have a delegate in the House of Representatives and a say in presidential nominations, although they cannot vote in general elections without residency in one of the 50 states.

The experience of Mr. Marchand, whose license was in English and Spanish, according to Mr. Begnaud's report, is a recurring matter in the United States. A 2017 poll showed that only a slim majority of Americans realize Puerto Ricans are American citizens.

Mr. Begnaud's report stirred similar stories from other American citizens born in Puerto Rico of their own encounters with private-sector employers and government agencies.

IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, HOUSTON DIVISION

In re: NATIONAL CINEMEDIA, LLC,[1] Debtor.) Chapter 11) Case No. 23-90291 (DRJ)

NOTICE OF HEARING TO CONSIDER (I) THE ADEQUACY OF THE DISCLOSURE STATEMENT AND (II) CONFIRMATION OF THE CHAPTER 11 PLAN FILED BY THE DEBTOR AND RELATED VOTING AND OBJECTION DEADLINES

TO: ALL HOLDERS OF CLAIMS AGAINST AND INTERESTS IN THE DEBTOR AND PARTIES-IN-INTEREST IN THE ABOVE-CAPTIONED CHAPTER 11 CASE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT, on May 12, 2023, National CineMedia, LLC, as debtor and debtor in possession (the "Debtor") in the above-captioned case, filed the *First Amended Plan of Reorganization of National CineMedia, LLC Pursuant to Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Code* [Docket No. 249] (as may be amended, modified, or supplemented from time to time, the "Plan"), and a disclosure statement for the Plan, [Docket No. 250] (as may be amended, modified, or supplemented from time to time, the "Disclosure Statement")[2] pursuant to section 1125 of chapter 11 of title 11 of the United States Code (the "Bankruptcy Code"). On May 11, 2023, the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Texas (the "Court") entered an order [Docket No. 244](the "Disclosure Statement Order"): (a) authorizing the Debtor to solicit votes on the Plan; (b) conditionally approving the Disclosure Statement as containing "adequate information" pursuant to section 1125 of the Bankruptcy Code; (c) approving the solicitation materials and documents to be included in the solicitation packages; and (d) approving procedures for soliciting, receiving, and tabulating votes on the Plan and for filing objections to the Plan. Copies of the Plan and the Disclosure Statement may be obtained free of charge by visiting the website maintained by the Debtor's notice, claims, and solicitation agent, Omni Agent Solutions (the "Notice and Claims Agent"), at https://omniagentsolutions.com/NCM. Copies of the Plan and Disclosure Statement may also be obtained by calling the Notice and Claims Agent at (866) 956-2144 (Toll Free U.S. & Canada) or (747) 293-0095 (Non-U.S. & Canada Parties).

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE THAT, within four (4) business days after entry of the Disclosure Statement Order, or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter, the Debtor will complete the mailing of the solicitation packages to solicit votes to accept the Plan from the Holders of Claims in Class 3 and Holders of Claims in Class 4 each of record as of May 10, 2023 (the "Voting Record Date"). **The deadline for the submission of votes to accept or reject the Plan is at 4:00 p.m. (prevailing Central Time) on June 20, 2023.**

Combined Hearing and Critical Information Regarding Objecting to the Plan or the Disclosure Statement

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE THAT, a hearing to consider confirmation of the Plan, and any objection thereto, will be held on **June 26, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. (prevailing Central Time)** before The Honorable David R. Jones, United States Bankruptcy Judge, in Courtroom 400 of the United States Bankruptcy Court, 515 Rusk Avenue, Houston, Texas 77002, or as soon thereafter as counsel may be heard (the "Combined Hearing"). The Combined Hearing may be adjourned from time to time without further notice other than an announcement of the adjourned date or dates in open court or by a notice of adjournment or notice of agenda of matters scheduled for hearing filed by the Debtor with the Court and available on the electronic case filing docket and the Debtor's website at https://omniagentsolutions.com/NCM.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE THAT, any objections to confirmation of the Plan must (a) be in writing; (b) conform to the Bankruptcy Code, Bankruptcy Rules, the Bankruptcy Local Rules, and any orders of the Court; (c) state, with particularity, the basis and nature of any objection to the Plan or Disclosure Statement and, if practicable, a proposed modification to the Plan or Disclosure Statement that would resolve such objection; and (d) be filed with the Court on or before **June 14, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. (prevailing Central Time)** (the "Plan and Disclosure Statement Objection Deadline").

UNLESS AN OBJECTION IS TIMELY SERVED AND FILED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS NOTICE (THE "NOTICE"), IT MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED BY THE COURT. IF THE PLAN IS CONFIRMED BY THE COURT, IT WILL BE BINDING ON THE DEBTOR, THE REORGANIZED DEBTOR, ANY AND ALL HOLDERS OF CLAIMS OR INTERESTS (REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEIR CLAIMS OR INTERESTS ARE DEEMED TO HAVE ACCEPTED OR REJECTED THE PLAN), ALL ENTITIES THAT ARE PARTIES TO OR ARE SUBJECT TO THE SETTLEMENTS, COMPROMISES, RELEASES, DISCHARGES, AND INJUNCTIONS DESCRIBED IN THE PLAN OR THE CONFIRMATION ORDER, EACH ENTITY ACQUIRING PROPERTY UNDER THE PLAN OR THE CONFIRMATION ORDER, AND ANY AND ALL NON-DEBTOR PARTIES TO EXECUTORY CONTRACTS AND UNEXPIRED LEASES WITH THE DEBTOR.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THE DISCHARGES, INJUNCTIONS, EXCULPATIONS, RELEASES, AND OPT OUT RIGHTS UNDER THE PLAN. ARTICLE VIII OF THE PLAN CONTAINS THE DISCHARGE, RELEASE, INJUNCTION, EXCULPATION PROVISIONS, AND OPT OUT RIGHTS. THUS, YOU ARE ADVISED TO REVIEW AND CONSIDER THE PLAN CAREFULLY BECAUSE YOUR RIGHTS MIGHT BE AFFECTED THEREUNDER.

IF YOU (A) VOTE TO ACCEPT THE PLAN, (B) ARE DEEMED TO ACCEPT THE PLAN AND DO NOT AFFIRMATIVELY OPT OUT OF THE RELEASES PROVIDED IN THE PLAN, (C) ABSTAIN FROM VOTING ON THE PLAN AND DO NOT AFFIRMATIVELY OPT OUT OF THE RELEASES PROVIDED IN THE PLAN, (D) VOTE TO REJECT THE PLAN OR ARE DEEMED TO REJECT THE PLAN AND DO NOT AFFIRMATIVELY OPT OUT OF THE RELEASES PROVIDED IN THE PLAN, OR (E) ARE GIVEN NOTICE OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO OPT OUT OF GRANTING SUCH RELEASES PROVIDED IN THE PLAN BUT DO NOT OPT OUT (IN EACH CASE ONLY SO LONG AS SUCH HOLDER IS PERMITTED TO OPT OUT), YOU SHALL BE DEEMED TO HAVE CONSENTED TO THE RELEASES CONTAINED IN ARTICLE 8.3 OF THE PLAN. PLEASE BE ADVISED YOUR RECOVERY UNDER THE PLAN WILL BE THE SAME IF YOU OPT OUT.

YOU ARE ADVISED AND ENCOURAGED TO CAREFULLY REVIEW AND CONSIDER THE PLAN, INCLUDING THE RELEASE, EXCULPATION, AND INJUNCTION PROVISIONS, AS YOUR RIGHTS MAY BE AFFECTED.

[1] The Debtor's address is 6300 South Syracuse Way, Suite 300, Centennial, Colorado 80111. The last four digits of the Debtor's taxpayer identification number are 2505.

[2] Capitalized terms used but not otherwise defined herein shall have the meanings ascribed to such terms in the Plan or Disclosure Statement, as applicable. The statements contained herein are summaries of the provisions contained in the Plan and Disclosure Statement and do not purport to be precise or complete statements of all the terms and provisions of the Plan or documents referred to therein. To the extent there is a discrepancy between the terms herein and the Plan or Disclosure Statement, the Plan and Disclosure Statement, as applicable, shall govern and control. For a more detailed description of the Plan, please refer to the Disclosure Statement.



HILARY SWIFT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Members of the Writers Guild of America picketed outside Radio City Music Hall on Monday, in an attempt to disrupt NBC Universal's upfronts.

Striking Writers Disrupt TV's Big Ad Event

By JOHN KOBLIN

As scores of marketers made their way to Radio City Music Hall on Monday morning for a major event hosted by NBCUniversal, they were greeted by dozens of striking writers marching near the entrances to the building.

"NBC, you're no good, pay your writers like you should!" they chanted.

As the writers' strike enters its third week, demonstrators have set their sights on disturbing the so-called upfront week, a decades-old tradition where media companies stage lavish events to promote their lineups in an attempt to woo advertisers.

"This is why 'Saturday Night Live' wasn't on, huh?" one marketer remarked to another outside Radio City.

Even before Monday, when the upfronts officially started, the striking writers had already successfully shaken up the event. Netflix, which introduced commercials last year, was poised to have its first-ever upfront on Wednesday at the storied Paris Theater. But as executives grew concerned about the demonstrations, the streaming company abruptly canceled the in-person event late last week, and elected to make it virtual instead.

Other major media companies — including Fox, Disney and Warner Bros. Discovery — have decided to forge ahead. Still, media executives have been anxiously awaiting the fallout from the prospect of hundreds of writers assembling on picket lines.

Text messages flew back and forth all weekend: Would more companies cancel their in-person upfront presentations? Would the sight and sounds of marching writers be too much for some marketers to bear, leaving hundreds of empty seats at venues like the Javits Center and the Theater at Madison Square Garden? And how much would a chaotic scene affect their bottom lines?

Negotiations between the major Hollywood studios and the Writers Guild of America, the union that represents the writers, broke down on May 1, and 11,500 writers for television and film immediately went on strike. The writers contend that their wages have stagnated and working conditions have deteriorated in the streaming era.

But the writers are not just demonstrating outside the major studios. They have also managed to delay or shut down some productions where scripts are in the can and filming continues. They have gone far afield as well, setting up pickets outside productions in Maplewood, N.J., Chicago and Philadelphia. Ted Sarandos, the co-chief executive of Netflix, canceled an appearance at the PEN America Literary Gala because of the threat of demonstrators. And there are grave concerns in the theater world that the Tony Awards will be postponed if the writers proceed with a plan to picket the award show.

Even without the strike, the mood surrounding this year's upfronts was gloomy. Advertising dollars remain a vital source of revenue for media companies, and billions of dollars are usually traded in the weeks and months after the upfronts. But the advertising market has been weak because of the declining viewership on network and cable television combined with broader economic concerns. Marketers have already indicated they are not willing to spend as freely as they have in previous upfronts.

'This is why "Saturday Night Live" wasn't on, huh?'

One marketer remarking to another outside Radio City Music Hall.

Arjan Dijk, the chief marketing officer of Booking.com, said that "it's looking like a buyers market this year." And Kelly Metz, the managing director of advanced TV at Omnicom Media Group, said ad buyers responded to how their "clients are feeling and doing and faring, and there are some significant economic headwinds."

NBCUniversal has gone through a particularly chaotic stretch in recent weeks. In late April, NBCUniversal's chief executive was dismissed for inappropriate conduct. And late last week, Linda Yaccarino, NBCUniversal's advertising chief and longtime upfront master of ceremonies, abruptly left the company to become the chief executive of Twitter.

Ms. Yaccarino had been in rehearsals for this year's upfront as late as Thursday until Elon Musk tweeted that he had hired a new chief executive for Twitter. NBCUniversal announced on Friday that she was leaving, effective immediately, sending the company scrambling to rework the event.

At the NBCUniversal upfront, the strike's effect was apparent from the get-go. The gatherings are usually star-studded events, but with many actors and celebrities refusing to cross picket lines, the company turned to its news division for help. The "Morning Joe" host Willie Geist made an introduction for a "Saturday Night Live" trailer. And Stephanie Ruhle of MSNBC previewed the company's upcoming lineup of dramas.

When a trailer came on featuring NBC legends like Amy Poehler and the "Law & Order" executive producer Dick Wolf, it began with a title card disclosing that the interviews were taped in April, before the writers' strike began.

Still, the company was able to book some big named guests. Reba McEntire, the country singer who will be a judge on "The Voice" next season, performed, as did Nick Jonas.

And even with significantly pared down presentations, fears that marketers would stay away were unfounded — nearly every seat at Radio City Music Hall was occupied.

The I.R.S. Acknowledges Black Americans Face Audits at a Higher Rate

By ALAN RAPPEPORT

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service said on Monday that Black taxpayers have been far more likely to be audited than others and that it is considering changes to its case selection process to address discrimination in how the tax code is enforced.

The acknowledgment came after the publication of research this year showing that Black taxpayers were disproportionately audited, prompting calls from members of Congress for a review into the methodology and algorithms that help determine who is selected. The tax collection agency, which received an $80 billion infusion in funding last year as part of the Inflation Reduction Act, has said it would work to make the system more equitable.

"While there is a need for further research, our initial findings support the conclusion that Black taxpayers may be audited at higher rates than would be expected given their share of the population," Daniel Werfel, the I.R.S. commissioner, wrote in a letter to Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon, the Democratic chairman of the Senate Finance Committee.

Mr. Werfel said the I.R.S. had dedicated "significant resources" to determine the reasons for the disparity and evaluating the data that is available to the agency when deciding who to audit and its automated processes. He suggested that the I.R.S. could consider basing audits on "broader tax issues" rather than focusing on people who might be improperly claiming earned-income tax credits.

The research found that Black taxpayers were three to five times more likely than taxpayers who are not Black to be audited. It noted that the I.R.S. disproportionately flagged tax returns with potential errors in the claiming of certain credits, like the earned-income tax credit, which supplements low-income workers' incomes in an effort to alleviate poverty.

The I.R.S. does not collect information about race as part of the tax-filing process, and Mr. Werfel did not say whether he believed that should change.

Senator Elizabeth Warren, Democrat of Massachusetts, said last month that the I.R.S. should collect racial data in a way that allows the agency to guard against racial bias.

Mr. Wyden said on Monday that it was "shameful" that racial bias in algorithms used by the I.R.S. had been guiding the audit selection process. He urged Mr. Werfel to correct that with the next filing system.

"You cannot have equality in society if algorithms and other automated systems that affect people's lives treat them differently based on the color of their skin," Mr. Wyden said.

'When evidence of unfair treatment is presented, we must take immediate actions to address it.'

Daniel Werfel, the I.R.S. commissioner.

Mr. Werfel said he intended to use some of the $80 billion that has been dedicated to modernizing the I.R.S. to improving outreach to underserved communities and helping those taxpayers claim credits that are available to them. He added that the agency would also be working to reduce disparities in tax enforcement on the basis of gender, geography and ethnicity.

"The I.R.S. is committed to enforcing tax laws in a manner that is fair and impartial," Mr. Werfel said. "When evidence of unfair treatment is presented, we must take immediate actions to address it."



SHURAN HUANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Daniel Werfel, the I.R.S. commissioner, said the agency had dedicated "significant resources" to determine the reasons for the disparity.

San Francisco Fed Ties to S.V.B. Chief Attract Scrutiny to Century-Old Setup

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

liticians are beginning to question whether the way the Fed has been organized for more than a century makes sense today.

"They're like a glorified advisory committee," said Kaleb Nygaard, who researches central banks at the University of Pennsylvania. "It causes massive headaches in the best of times, potentially fatal aneurysms in the worst of times."

The Fed boards date back to 1913.

In the days after Silicon Valley Bank's collapse, headlines about Mr. Becker's close ties to his bank's regulator abounded, with many raising questions about a possible conflict of interest.

Though regional Fed presidents and other officials play a limited role in bank oversight — which is mostly in Washington's domain — some critics wondered if supervisors at the San Francisco Fed failed to effectively police Silicon Valley Bank partly because of the reserve bank's close ties to the bank's chief executive.

And some asked: Why do banks have representatives on the Fed Board at all?

The answer is tied to the Fed's history.

When Congress and the White House created the Fed in 1913, they were skeptical about giving either the government or the private sector unilateral power over the nation's money supply. So they compromised. They created a public Fed Board in Washington, alongside quasi-private reserve banks around the country.

Those reserve banks, which ended up numbering 12 in total, would be set up like private companies with banks as their shareholders. And much like other private companies, they would be overseen by boards — ones that included bank representatives. Each of the Fed reserve banks has nine board members, or directors. Three of them come from banks, while the others come from other financial companies, businesses, and labor and community groups.



PATRICK T. FALLON/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Greg Becker, Silicon Valley Bank's former chief who sat on the San Francisco Fed's board of directors for years, will testify before the Senate committee.

"The setup is the way that it is because of the way the Fed was set up in 1913," said William Dudley, the former president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, who said that the directors served mainly as a sort of advisory focus group on banking issues and operational issues, like cybersecurity.

The boards may give members benefits.

Several former Fed officials said that the bank-related board members provided a valuable function, offering real-time insight into the finance industry. And 10 current and former Fed employees interviewed for this article agreed on one point: These boards have relatively little official power in the modern era.

While they vote for changes on a formerly important interest rate at the Fed — called the discount rate — that role has become much less critical over time. Board members select Fed presidents, though since the 2010 Dodd Frank law, the bank-tied directors have not been allowed to participate in those votes.

But the law didn't go so far as to cut bank representatives from the boards altogether because of a lobbying push to keep them intact, said Aaron Klein, who was deputy assistant secretary for economic policy at the Treasury Department at the time and worked closely on the law's passage.

"The Fed didn't want that, and neither did the bankers," Mr. Klein said.

From a bank's perspective, directorships offer prestige: Regional Fed board members rub shoulders with other bank and community leaders and with powerful central bankers.

They might also offer either an actual or a perceived information advantage about the economy and about monetary policy. Although the discount rate is not as important today, directors at some regional banks are given economic briefings as they make their decisions.

Regional board discount votes have often been seen as a sort of weather vane for how a regional bank's leadership is thinking about policy — suggesting that directors might know how their president is going to vote when it comes to the federal funds rate, the important interest rate that the Fed uses to guide the speed of the economy.

That is notable in an era in which Wall Street traders hang on Fed officials' every word when it comes to interest rates.

"It's a very awkward thing," said Narayana Kocherlakota, a former president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. "There's no gain to having them vote on discount rates."

Renée Adams, a former New York Fed researcher who studies corporate boards and is now at the University of Oxford, has found that when a bank executive becomes a director, the stock price of their firm rises on the news.

"The market believes that they have some advantage," she said.

And Board members do get substantial face time with Fed presidents, who meet regularly with their directors. Mr. Becker would have seen Mary C. Daly, the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, at meetings held roughly once a month, her calendars suggest.

'Supervisory leniency' is a risk.

Bank-tied directors have no direct role in supervision, nor can they appoint officials or participate in budget decisions related to bank oversight, according to the Fed.

But Mr. Klein is skeptical that Mr. Becker's position on the San Francisco Fed's board did not matter at all in the case of Silicon Valley Bank.

"Who wants to be the person raising problems about the C.E.O. who is on the board of your own C.E.O.?" he said, explaining that even though the organizational structure might have drawn clear lines, those may not have cleanly applied in the "real world."

Ms. Adams's research found that banks whose executives sat on boards did in fact see fewer enforcement actions — slaps on the wrist from Fed supervisors — during the director's tenure.

"There may be supervisory leniency," she said.

Changing the system might prove difficult.

This is not the first time the Fed regional boards have raised ethical issues. In the years leading up to the 2008 financial crisis, Dick Fuld, the Lehman Brothers chief executive at the time, and Steve Friedman, who was a director at Goldman Sachs, both served on the New York Fed board.

Mr. Fuld resigned just before Lehman collapsed in 2008. Mr. Friedman left in 2009, after news broke that he had bought Goldman Sachs stock during the crisis, at a time when the Treasury and the Fed were drawing up plans to bolster big banks.

Given that controversy, politicians have at times focused on the Fed boards. The Democratic Party included language in its 2016 platform to bar executives of financial institutions from serving on reserve bank boards.

And the issue has recently garnered bipartisan interest. Draft legislation under development by members of the Senate Banking Committee would limit directorships to small banks — those with less than $10 billion in assets, according to a person familiar with the material.

The committee has a hearing on Fed accountability planned for May 17. Senators Elizabeth Warren, Democrat from Massachusetts, and Rick Scott, Republican from Florida, plan to introduce the legislation ahead of that, a spokesperson for Ms. Warren said.

"It's dangerous and unethical for executives from the largest banks to serve on Fed boards where these bankers could secure preferential regulatory treatment or exploit privileged information," Ms. Warren said in a statement.

But — as the Dodd Frank legislation illustrated — stripping banks of their power at the Fed has been a heavy lift.

"As a political target," said Ms. Binder, the political scientist, "it's a little in the weeds."

RETAIL | MEDIA



JASON HENRY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



AMY LOMBARD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

"There's just an insane level of excitement that we have seen," said Manish Chandra, left, the chief executive of Poshmark, about live shopping. Alex Mahl, right, whose day job is in a law office, also sells clothes on Posh Shows.

Companies Are Trying to Make 'Live Shopping' a Thing

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE
United States' nascent live shopping market, which is estimated to bring in $32 billion in sales this year, according to the retail consulting firm Coresight Research. Eying the live shopping market in China, which, by comparison, is projected to bring in $647 billion this year, American companies have for years poured money into the medium, where people buy and sell products in real time over video. But American consumers have yet to take to live shopping in the same way.

In 2016, the e-commerce giant Alibaba launched Taobao Live, popularizing live shopping in China. The livestream landscape is much more fragmented in the United States, but even as shoppers return to stores, retailers and large tech firms are betting that consumers will continue searching for, and purchasing, items on their phones. For platforms, live shopping promises more engagement, with consumers sometimes spending hours watching hosts sell items. For retailers, it's another channel to sell their goods.

Alongside Poshmark, QVC's parent company Qurate recently started Sune, a live shopping app targeting Gen Z. Last year, Walmart, YouTube and eBay added or expanded their live shopping features. For Prime Day, Amazon recruited celebrities like Kevin Hart to promote its Amazon Live platform. Shein was an early adopter when it began Shein Live in 2016 for U.S. shoppers. It started with just a few hundred viewers per episode and now averages "hundreds of thousands of viewers per episode," said George Chiao, Shein's U.S. president, in a statement.

"There's just an insane level of excitement that we have seen," said Manish Chandra, the chief executive of Poshmark, at the rooftop event. "In a very few short months, they're proving that this form of live shopping works," he added, referring to Posh Shows sellers like Ms. Lazovic.

As big tech and major retailers work to gain a foothold in live shopping, start-ups like Whatnot and Ntwrk are touting their tight-knit customer communities as a blueprint for live shopping in the United States. Investors poured more than $380 million into livestream e-commerce companies in the United States last year, up from $36 million in 2020, according to PitchBook.

"We believe shopping is not just about transaction. It's about experience," said Liyia Wu, chief executive and founder of the live shopping start-up ShopShops. Live shopping can simulate "an offline shopping experience online," she added.

ShopShops in 2021 began focusing on American consumers instead of Chinese ones because it saw more opportunity in the American retail market, Ms. Wu said. Because big players haven't yet defined live shopping in the United States, ShopShops and other newcomers could "build the overall behavior," she added.

For some viewers, live shopping has taken the place of malls and morning cable shows. AJ Johnson, a lifestyle blogger in Scottsdale, Ariz., watches livestreams on ShopShops most days of the week, but her favorite show streams at 6 a.m. on Wednesdays.

The app is more than a place to shop for clothing and jewelry, she said. Ms. Johnson, 36, has found entertainment and community on ShopShops through talking to hosts and other shoppers about their lives.

"Some people play video games. I just watch livestream shopping," Ms. Johnson said. "It's like an escape."

But live shopping faces stiff competition in the United States, where linear TV, streaming channels and social media also vie for consumers' attention and money. Last year, 78 percent of American adults said they had never participated in a live shopping event, according to a survey by Morning Consult.

Some American companies have already backed out of live shopping. Meta made a major push into e-commerce at the beginning of the pandemic but shut down Instagram's live shopping feature this March, and Facebook's in October.

Other companies are making much slower entrances into live shopping. Since November, TikTok has been testing its live shopping tool, TikTok Shop, in the United States. It is betting that users will stay on TikTok to watch merchants — both big brands like the beauty line e.l.f. and the California apparel company PacSun, as well as small business owners — share their products and then purchase the goods through the app.

But the rollout of TikTok Shop has dragged in the United States. The feature has been available in parts of Southeast Asia for more than a year, and Douyin, TikTok's Chinese counterpart, has offered live shopping since 2018.

In the United States, TikTok is facing intense criticism from lawmakers and regulators. More than two dozens states have banned the app on government devices. And in April, Montana legislators approved a bill to block TikTok in the state, a first-of-its-kind prohibition.

TikTok declined to say when TikTok Shop would become widely available in the United States.

> **'In a very few short months, they're proving that this form of live shopping works.'**
>
> Manish Chandra, C.E.O. of Poshmark, on the rapid development of the concept.

Companies have taken different approaches to working with hosts. On Poshmark, anyone with an account can sell items from their closets. Other platforms work directly with the merchants, as is the case with Amazon, which uses celebrities and influencers to sell a variety of products, like printers and kitchenware.

For Paige DeSorbo, a podcaster and influencer on the Bravo reality series "Summer House," hosting her own show on Amazon Live allows her followers to see a "totally different" side of her personality.

"People trust me on certain things, so they want my opinion on whether it's fashion or beauty," she said. "When I'm talking to them on live, I do feel like it's more, we're friends."

Ms. DeSorbo, 30, has hosted her show weekly since the end of 2021, typically filming episodes with two camera operators, one set designer and at least one producer. She receives a flat hosting fee from Amazon and commissions when people buy products featured on her Amazon page, or during her streams.

During a recent livestream, Ms. DeSorbo recreated outfits she had shared on social media. As she tried on "dupes"— fashion lingo for knockoff versions of expensive items — for her outfits, she answered viewers' questions about what to wear to events like comedy shows and summer vacations.

"It's like talking to the wizard behind the curtain," one of her more than 500 viewers commented, as Ms. DeSorbo talked about a recent trip with other reality TV cast members.

Companies will need to teach hosts how to clinch sales and speak directly to shoppers, a worthwhile investment, especially for the hosts, said Deborah Weinswig, founder of Coresight Research. In China, companies originally hired sellers to boost particular brands. Those sellers then went on to build their own audiences, drawing shoppers and eventually gaining enough agency to choose their own products and brands.

"The biggest misunderstanding was that celebrities were who were going to be driving this industry," Ms. Weinswig said. "That's why I think we in the U.S. got derailed because you being a celebrity or you being a creator — you are not necessarily going to be a good host."

Posh Shows isn't focused on celebrity hosts. Instead, anyone with a Poshmark account can go live — including Alex Mahl, who works full time at an attorney's office and streams live on Posh Shows for hours after work.

Ms. Mahl, 26, spends about 40 hours a week on her side hustle, including hours of prepping mostly Lululemon clothes to sell, and uploading photos of them to the Poshmark app, where viewers can see the items throughout the show. She had sold more than $50,000 worth of inventory by early May, and estimates that she will earn $200,000 in sales by the end of the year.

Ms. Mahl has considered making this her primary job but remains cautious. She received early access to Posh Shows and is keeping an eye on her viewer count as more users go live. On a recent Monday evening, Ms. Mahl competed with dozens of other sellers, including a mother with a baby strapped on her back selling New York & Company dresses for $8, and a man selling a Louis Vuitton wallet with a starting price of $475.

"Am I nervous that more people have access? Yes, I am," Ms. Mahl said. "But I'm confident in myself and what I've built for it to continue to go up in a good direction."

Possible Cyberattack Disrupts Print Operations at The Philadelphia Inquirer

By MICHAEL LEVENSON

A possible cyberattack on The Philadelphia Inquirer disrupted the newspaper's print operation over the weekend and prompted it to close its newsroom through at least Tuesday, when its staff will be covering an expensive and fiercely contested mayoral primary.

Elizabeth H. Hughes, the publisher and chief executive of The Inquirer, said that the newspaper discovered "anomalous activity on its computer systems" on Thursday and "immediately took those systems offline."

But The Inquirer was unable to print its regular Sunday edition, the newspaper reported. Instead, print subscribers received a Sunday "early edition," which went to press on Friday night. The newspaper also reported on Sunday that its ability to post and update stories on its website, Inquirer.com, was "sometimes slower than normal."

The Monday print editions of The Inquirer and The Philadelphia Daily News, which The Inquirer also publishes, were distributed as scheduled, Evan Benn, a company spokesman, said.

But employees will not be permitted to work in the newsroom at least through Tuesday because access to The Inquirer's internet servers has been disrupted, Ms. Hughes said in an email to the staff on Sunday evening that was shared with The New York Times.

Ms. Hughes said that the company was looking for a co-working space for Tuesday, when The Inquirer will be covering a closely contested Democratic primary that is all but certain to determine the next mayor of Philadelphia — the largest city in Pennsylvania, a presidential swing state.

"I truly don't think it will impact it at all, short of us not being able to be together in the formal newsroom," said Diane Mastrull, an editor who is president of The NewsPaper Guild of Greater Philadelphia, the union that represents reporters, photographers and other staff members at The Inquirer. "Covid has certainly taught us to do our jobs remotely."

She said on Monday that the newspaper's content management system, which staff members use to write and edit stories, was "operating with continued workarounds."

"I would not use the word 'normal,'" Ms. Mastrull said.

Ms. Hughes said that The Inquirer had notified the F.B.I. and had "implemented alternative processes to enable publication of print editions."



MATT SLOCUM/ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Philadelphia Inquirer, citing "anomalous activity" on its computer systems, told its staff not to work in the newsroom at least through Tuesday.

The newspaper was also working with Kroll, a corporate investigation firm, to restore its systems and to investigate the episode, Ms. Hughes said.

The Inquirer, in its news story on the "apparent cyberattack," said it was the most significant disruption to the publication of the newspaper since January 1996, when a major blizzard dropped more than 30 inches of snow on Philadelphia.

The newspaper reported that Ms. Hughes, citing a continuing investigation, had declined to answer detailed questions about the episode, including who was behind it, whether The Inquirer or its employees appeared to have been specifically targeted, or whether any sensitive employee or subscriber information might have been compromised.

In an email on Monday, Mr. Benn, the company spokesman, said: "As our investigation is ongoing, we are unable to provide additional information at this time. Should we discover that any personal data was affected, we will notify and support" anyone who might have been affected.

Special Agent E. Edward Conway of the F.B.I. field office in Philadelphia said that while the agency was aware of the issue, it was the bureau's practice not to comment on specific cyber incidents. "However, when the F.B.I. learns about potential cyberattacks, it's customary that we offer our assistance in these matters," Mr. Conway said in an email.

Ms. Mastrull, who was working as an editor over the weekend, said that staff members had noticed on Saturday that they could not log on to the content management system.

They were given a workaround, she said, but the process created "very, very difficult working conditions" as the staff covered the last weekend of campaign events before the primary, Taylor Swift concerts at Lincoln Financial Field and Game 7 of the Eastern Conference semifinals between the Boston Celtics and the Philadelphia 76ers.

Employees were "a little concerned that there weren't enough protections against this, and very frustrated that the company's communication was lacking specifics," Ms. Mastrull said.

In 2018, The Los Angeles Times said that a cyberattack had disrupted its printing operations and those at newspapers in San Diego and Florida. Unnamed sources cited by The Los Angeles Times suggested that the newspaper might have been hit by ransomware — a pernicious attack that scrambles computer programs and files before demanding that the victim pay a ransom to unscramble them.

The Guardian reported that it was hit by a ransomware attack in December in which the personal data of staff members in Britain was compromised. The Guardian reported that the attack forced it to close its offices for several months.

In an email to the staff of The Inquirer on Sunday night, Ms. Mastrull summarized the day's news and paid tribute to the staff members who covered it, "despite a publishing system rendered virtually inoperable."

"Now all we have to do is find some co-working space so we can cover a really important election Tuesday," she wrote. "Can't keep us down!"

Sports
The New York Times

GOLF | P.G.A. CHAMPIONSHIP

'It's not like tennis, where you knew you were going to get Nadal and Djokovic.'
JACK NICKLAUS, on the benefit of several golfers being in the running to be considered the best.

A Giant of the Game, With His Mind on the Future



DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES
Jack Nicklaus, 83, at Augusta National during the Masters in April. Much of his focus is on the P.G.A. Championship this week at Oak Hill in Pittsford, N.Y.

Nicklaus doesn't dig the long ball, but says that LIV may not be so bad.

By ALAN BLINDER

In 1950, when the P.G.A. Championship came to Scioto Golf Club, a 10-year-old boy wandered the grounds near Columbus, Ohio, searching for autographs. He had just started playing golf that year, and the likes of Sam Snead and Lloyd Mangrum were populating his home course.

The boy was Jack Nicklaus.

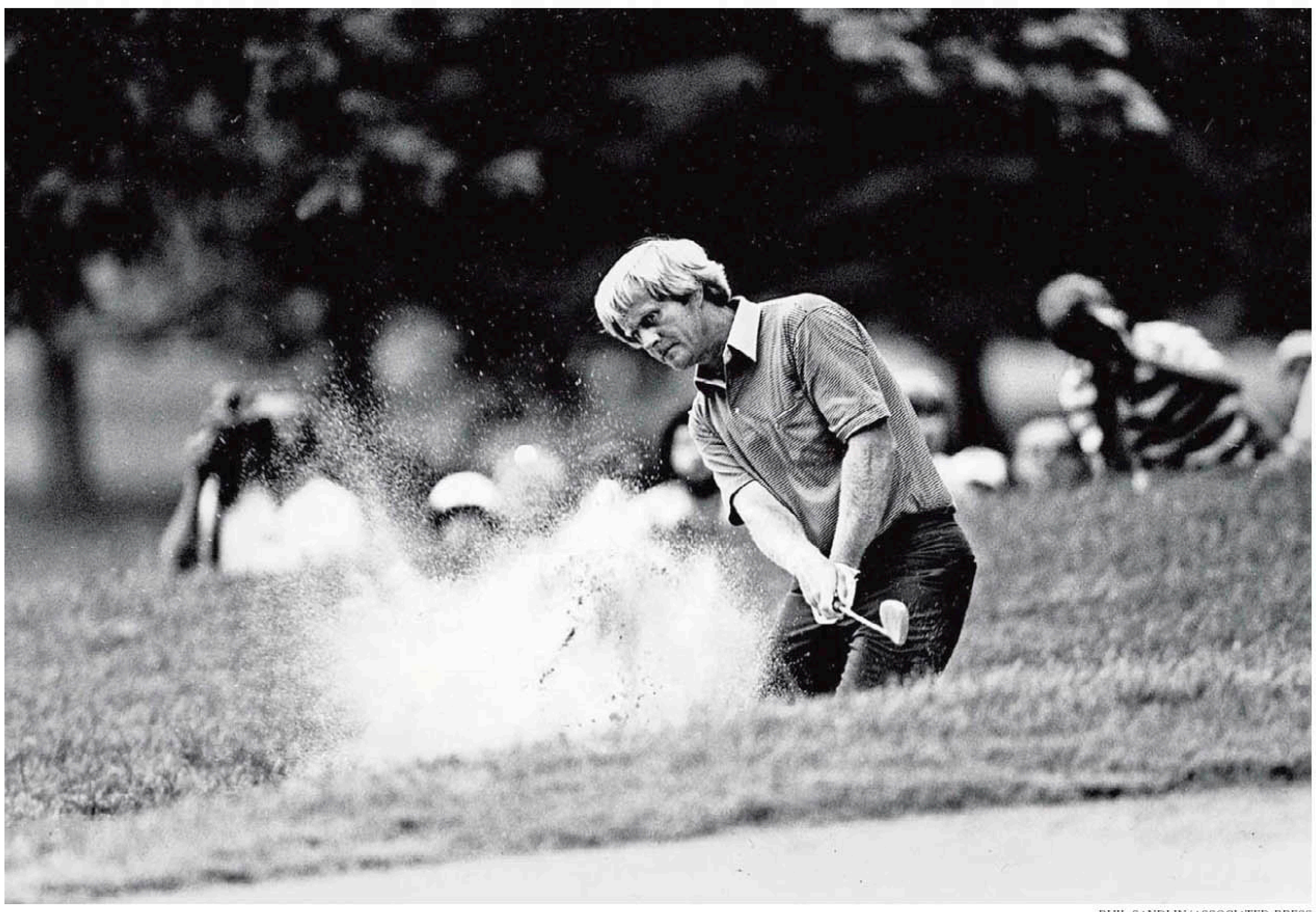
The spectacle, he recalled this spring, was among the earliest inspirations for a golfing career whose brilliance became abundantly clear 60 years ago. Nicklaus had won his first major title by then, but 1963 brought the 23-year-old player his first Masters Tournament victory and his inaugural triumph at a P.G.A. Championship.

Nicklaus's fifth and final P.G.A. Championship victory came in 1980 at Oak Hill Country Club in Pittsford, N.Y., where the tournament will be played beginning on Thursday.

Over two interviews last month — one at Augusta National Golf Club and another by telephone — Nicklaus considered Rory McIlroy and Jon Rahm, the new LIV Golf league backed by Saudi Arabia, the future of the golf ball and whether anyone might win at Oak Hill by seven strokes, as he did in 1980.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

18 MAJOR CHAMPIONSHIPS | **19** SECOND-PLACE FINISHES IN MAJORS | **46** TOP-THREE FINISHES IN MAJORS | **73** VICTORIES ON P.G.A. TOUR



PHIL SANDLIN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nicklaus relied on his short game in 1980 at Oak Hill when he won the last of his five P.G.A. Championship titles.



ANDREW SPEAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A statue of Nicklaus near Muirfield in Dublin, Ohio. Nicklaus was 10 in 1950 when he wandered the grounds of Scioto Golf Club near Columbus when the P.G.A. Championship was there.



PGA OF AMERICA, VIA GETTY IMAGES

After his win. In 1980 and 2003, there were four players under par total at Oak Hill in the P.G.A. In 2013, there were 21.

In 2013, when the P.G.A. Championship was last at Oak Hill, there were 21 players below par. There had only been four across the previous two P.G.A. Championships there, in 1980 and 2003. Had Oak Hill gotten too easy?

I won there in 1980, and I think 280 was par. Oak Hill played pretty darn tough. I didn't really play all that well that week, hit it all over the place, but every time I got it on the green, I holed it. I remember in the last round, I was in the lead and I was nervous because I wasn't hitting it that great. I hit in the rough and got it on the green, so I shot 35 feet on the first hole. I said, "Well, here we go," and started feeling a little more comfortable.

If a designer is looking to challenge today's players, how much of a challenge can he create by, as Andrew Green has now done at Oak Hill, rolling back the clock and looking back at the original Donald Ross designs?

You can't. The only thing you're going to roll back and add to is distance. Oak Hill, I thought was very different: Most Ross golf courses are relatively small greens, and Oak Hill had very large greens. And then, of course, Fazio came in there and did three or four holes in the middle part of the front nine, as I recall, and they didn't really look a lot like the other holes on the golf course that I saw in '68. I like Oak Hill; I think it's a great golf course. But you can tweak something right out of its tradition.

What should happen to the golf ball?

They say the golf ball has "only" increased 0.82 yards a year, which means in the last 10 years, it's increased 8.2 yards. You've got to put a line in the sand somewhere.

And I don't think that the U.S. Golf Association and R&A have really rolled the ball back much. What they've done is say, "We really don't want it to go any farther than this." And that's really only for the elite players. They left the golf ball alone for the average golfer.

It was a really good move to try to put a line in the sand. I mean, not everybody's got the ability to go buy the golf course next door, like you do at Augusta. You can't just keep buying land and adding. We used to have in this country probably a couple of thousand golf courses that could be tournament golf courses. Today, we maybe have 100.

A lot of the players say, "Why would you want to change something that's really good?"

Well, it's not because it's really good; it's because it's really good for a small percentage of people, and it needs to be better for a larger percentage of people. It's a game we hope that can be enjoyed by a lot of people.

Part of that enjoyment comes from the pros being able to play with the amateurs. I used to be able to play an exhibition with a club champion. We'd play the back tees, and I'd maybe hit it 15, 20 yards by him, but we had a game because he knew the golf course. Today, could you imagine Tiger Woods or Jon Rahm going to play an exhibition with a club champion? They'd hit it 100 yards by him. I mean, that's not a game.

There's also debate about the world ranking system. Who is the best player in the world right now?



WARREN LITTLE/GETTY IMAGES

Nicklaus says that Rory McIlroy, left, needs to concentrate better, and that he sees a lot of himself in Jon Rahm, right.

It's very debatable. I think Rory McIlroy is the one who I would have said probably is the best player in the world, but then Rory doesn't even make the cut at the first major. How does the best player in the world miss the cut at the first major?

Jon Rahm is pretty darn good. And you've got Brooks Koepka, who has come back and he's leading the tournament.

I guess that's the beauty of golf. It's not like tennis, where you knew you were going to get Nadal and Djokovic.

Gary Player doesn't think golf has an era-defining figure at this moment — that there's not a Tiger, there's not someone like you.

No, there's not.

Is there a player who could become that person?

Rahm would be the closest.

Is it better for golf to have one megawatt superstar everyone knows, or is it better to have a bunch of guys with big followings but who don't command all of the attention?

I think most sports are probably more healthy with more stars — more diversity in what's going on and more people to look at. When Arnold Palmer and Gary and I played, if one of the three of us didn't play in a tournament, they felt the tournament was a failure.

But if you've got 10 or 12 guys who are really at the top, you don't have to get more than two or three of them to create a tournament and you've got a really good field. If there's only one guy, it's all on his back, and I don't think that's real good.

Since you mentioned Rory, what's holding him back?

I'm a big Rory fan, and he's a good friend of mine, and I talk a lot with him. But I really don't know. His usual is to go par, par, birdie, birdie, birdie, 8, and that's what he's not been doing. He and I have talked about it. I said, "Rory, it's got to be 100 percent concentration, and you can't let yourself get into a position where you can make a quad or whatever." I think he understands that very well. He's certainly very smart. Justin Thomas just missed the cut, and I root for Justin a lot, too. I spend a lot of time with him. Great kid. He's struggling, and he's missing just a little something right now. And Rahm looks like he's just loaded with confidence.

When you size up Rahm, what kind of scouting report do you come away with?

I've known him since he received a college award, the Nicklaus Award. I liked him then, and I followed his play from when he first started. I've always thought that he plays very smart golf. He played much the way I did: left to right, and played much for the power game. I like what he does. I like the way he goes about it. He's got a little bit of fire in him. He can get mad, which is OK because it usually helps him. Some guys get mad and it destroys them, but it seems to help him.

How do you see Rahm's approach to the game working at Oak Hill?

Oak Hill is a golf course that fits right down his alley. I was a left-to-right player, hit the ball long. When I won in 1980, I was the only person to break par. He's a good putter. I putted very well at Oak Hill. I didn't particularly play that great, but my putter was a deciding factor. Because my game was a strong game, I stayed in the tournament, and my putter won it for me, and I would think he'd fall into much the same category: If he was playing well or semiwell, he'll be there. If he doesn't putt well, he won't win.

But he's a pretty darn good putter.

Some of your colleagues have said they think there is a universe in which LIV, the new Saudi-backed league, could be good for golf. Do you buy that?

Competition is good anywhere. My own view is that I was a part of the start of the PGA Tour. [LIV Golf officials] talked to me about wanting me to do it, and I just told them: "I can't do it, guys. I started my legacy on the PGA Tour, and I have to stay there."

I don't have a big problem with it. I think there's a big place for a lot of those guys who are near the end of their career. I think it's all right from that standpoint.

But for me, it was not. And for any of the young guys who really love playing the game of golf and love competition, I don't think that 48 players and three rounds of golf and shotgun starts are what you really make a living of. They'll set their families up for a long time, and I have no problem with any of the guys who have left. But it is not my cup of tea. And is there a universe for both of them? Probably so. I don't know.

You host the Memorial Tournament in June. What do you make of this no-cut plan that is going to take effect sometimes on the PGA Tour next year?

I'm not fond of it. Some of it is coming from trying to not make the tournaments that aren't elevated too secondary. If you've got 120 guys playing in a cut and they're suddenly getting into the elevated tournaments, what kind of field are you going to have in the other tournaments? And if you have 70 players playing in one, the 71st player is a pretty darn good player on the PGA Tour.

I think what they're trying — and what it will do — is to get some guys you have not heard a lot of, and they're going to be your stars who come along. They're trying to build more names within the PGA Tour, and we'll have to see it and see how it works out.

At the Memorial Tournament, I'm not fond of a 70-player field for a couple of reasons. One is that we've got a lot of people who come out and see golf, and I want to see them golf all day, particularly on Thursday and Friday.

If Oak Hill doesn't play tougher this time around, should it stay in the mix for the majors?

Oak Hill will play plenty tough. Oak Hill is not going to bend; it's too good of a golf course to yield. I would imagine the P.G.A. Championship at Oak Hill in May will have a pretty tough crop of rough. Now the tour, on a weekly basis, has been cutting the rough down the fairways, and driving distance has been emphasized and accuracy has not.

I don't think golf should be played that way, personally. The Memorial Tournament rough will not be short.

I think that the game of golf is a combination of power, accuracy, intelligence and skill in how you play your shots. You try to make the golf course so that it doesn't favor a 320-yard hitter, and you don't want it to favor a 270-yard hitter, either. You want to give some diversity in there — some holes will favor some, and others will favor another — and their skill will allow that to happen.

I feel like the fellow who is playing the best golf in the full round is the guy who should win. The tour has been more on the entertainment factor and the guy shooting low scores. Well, during most of my career, I avoided the scores on. I felt like they didn't really bring my talent out, I suppose. When I got a good, tough golf course, that's where the better players shined, and Oak Hill will shine.

What are the chances anyone could win, as you did, by seven strokes?

If you get some rough and you get a bit of a dry period — you're going to have probably some wind and some odd weather — but one guy may catch lightning in a bottle, a little bit like I did, and win by several. You just don't know.

GOLF | P.G.A. CHAMPIONSHIP



DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Thomas with his caddie at last month's Masters, where he missed the cut at the event for the first time in his career.

Thomas Returns As a Champion, Not as a Winner

By BILL PENNINGTON

PITTSFORD, N.Y. — Five years ago, when Justin Thomas came to the 2018 P.G.A. Championship as the defending champion, he was still cruising along as one of the top three players in the game and had spent a stint as the top-ranked men's golfer in the world.

At that moment, elite golf came easily to him.

Thomas was 25 and the winner of one major championship. This week, Thomas once again returns to the P.G.A. Championship as the defending champion. But things are different now.

Since his victory last year at the P.G.A. Championship in Tulsa, Okla., Thomas has endured the bumpy, maddening irregularity typical of any golf career (amateur or professional). He comes to Oak Hill Country Club outside Rochester, N.Y., without finishing first in any of the 20 events he has entered since claiming his second career major victory in 2022.

In April, he missed the cut at the Masters, a first for him. A month earlier, he stumbled to a tie for 60th at the Players Championship, an event he won two years ago.

In 10 tournaments this year, he has just two top-10 finishes and five results outside the top 20. None of this is particularly unusual in the narrative of any lengthy pro golf career, but that has not made it any easier for Thomas, whose father and grandfather were PGA teaching professionals and whose emotions are often readily apparent on the golf course.

Always candid, Thomas conceded on Monday that his game was tattered enough at times in the last year that he teed up for some tournaments knowing, in the back of his mind, that he could not win. How must that feel for someone who was once rated the best golfer on the planet?

"It's terrible," Thomas answered. "How I described it for a couple months is that I've never felt so far and so close at the same time. That's a very hard thing to explain, and it's also a very hard way to try to compete and win a golf tournament."

But Thomas does feel as if he might be battling his way out of the golfing darkness in recent weeks. He shot three rounds under par at this month's Wells Fargo Championship on the PGA Tour to finish in a tie for 14th. He has learned a newfangled system of putting, which he said was complex but made reading the greens very simple (sounds like golf, right?). Nonetheless, he sees progress with his putting.

Perhaps most important, he has allowed other golfers to help him, because the sport can be too hard to manage by yourself.

Thomas, for example, played his 18-hole practice round on Monday with Max Homa, who is now the sixth-ranked player worldwide but who once appeared to have bungled his chance of making a living as a golfer — at about the same time Thomas was winning his first major title.

In 2017, Homa lost his PGA Tour playing privileges after he missed the cut in 15 of 17 tournaments. In golf parlance, it is called losing your tour card, which is a gracious way of saying you were expelled from the top level of golf for shoddy play.

The next year, Homa magically requalified for the tour, in part by improbably making birdies on each of his final four holes of a minor league tour golf event. Since then, Homa has won more than $21 million on the PGA Tour with two of his six tour victories coming in the last eight months.

On Monday, as Thomas was attempting to explain how he was trying to fight his way back to the highest echelon of men's golf — and how vital it was to remain optimistic instead of pouting — he used Homa as an example.

"Nobody is in a better place than Max Homa out here," Thomas said. "There's no other top player in the world who's gone through what he's gone through in terms of having a tour card, losing your tour card, having to earn it back and then becoming one of the top players in the world.

"I've talked to him about it before because he's like, nobody out here really knows how bad it can be."

Thomas snickered. He was not going to let himself feel too badly about his slump. He is still the 13th-ranked golfer in the world. Or as he added: "It's all relative. And it's all about making the most of whatever situation you're in.

"That's how you get out of it, by just playing your way out of it. You hit shots when you want to and make those putts when you need to, and then your confidence builds back up. The next thing you know, you don't even remember what you were thinking in those times when you felt down."

But Thomas smiled. He is now a veteran at 30, not just getting started in the big time at 25. He knows he has chosen a mercurial vocation.

"Like anything else in golf," Thomas said, "it's easier said than done."



ANDY LYONS/GETTY IMAGES

Justin Thomas on Monday at Oak Hill. He has not won any of his 20 events since capturing last year's P.G.A. Championship.

PRO BASKETBALL | N.B.A. DRAFT

Amid the Current Playoffs, a Lottery That Could Help Shape Future Ones

By VICTOR MATHER

Fans of the N.B.A. are about to take a break from praying that a wild, off-balance 3-pointer goes in and instead turn to praying that a particular envelope happens to contain the logo of their favorite team.

The N.B.A. draft lottery may seem an odd spectacle, but it can affect the future of franchises for years to come. And this year, it carries special import: The winner will have the right to select Victor Wembanyama of France, who is predicted to be a game-changing superstar.



CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Pistons, the Rockets and the Spurs have the best chances of getting the first shot at drafting Victor Wembanyama.

When and where is the lottery, and how can I watch?

The lottery is Tuesday at 8 p.m. Eastern in Chicago. ESPN will broadcast the event; you can also expect to find the news quickly on social media, as fans celebrate or lament the result.

Who is in this year's lottery?

The 14 teams that did not make the playoffs are eligible; that includes the four teams that made the play-in games but failed to advance to the playoffs proper.

It's a little more complicated than that, though. Because of past trades, the Dallas Mavericks will give their pick to the Knicks unless it falls in the top 10, and the Chicago Bulls will give their pick to the Orlando Magic unless it is in the top four.

How does it work?

A random draw will be held to determine the top four draft picks, with weaker teams having better chances. Picks 5 through 14 will then be allotted in reverse order of the teams' records.

Who has the best chance at the No. 1 pick?

Each of the three weakest teams in the regular season — the Detroit Pistons, the Houston Rockets and the San Antonio Spurs — has a 14 percent chance of getting the top pick.

Who else has a chance at No. 1?

The rest of the teams have smaller chances on a sliding scale, from the Charlotte Hornets at 13 percent all the way down to the New Orleans Pelicans, who had a winning regular-season record and have just an 0.5 percent chance at the top pick. The rest of the teams with a chance, with figures rounded to the nearest percent: Blazers (11 percent), Magic (9), Pacers (7), Wizards (7), Jazz (5), Mavericks (3), Bulls (2), Thunder (2), Raptors (1).

What about Picks 15 through 30?

Those are all set, starting with the playoff team with the worst record, the Hawks, at No. 15, and moving down pick by pick to the better teams.

Is what I see on television the actual lottery?

No. What you see is more of a ceremonial unveiling of the draft order. The actual lottery is held just before in front of a handful of league, team and news media witnesses sequestered in another room.

I read that the lottery is fixed. Is that true?

No. Conspiracy theorists sometimes claim that the league fixes the draw to benefit teams in big markets, notably for the inaugural lottery in 1985, when the Knicks won and earned the right to pick Patrick Ewing.

There has never been any credible evidence that a draft lottery has indeed been fixed, and with no New York or Los Angeles teams in the draw, one hopes the conspiracy talk will be muted this year.

When and where is the actual draft?

June 22 at Barclays Center in Brooklyn, for the ninth time in the past 10 years. (The exception was the pandemic year, when it was held via conference call.)

Who will be picked?

Everyone expects Wembanyama to go No. 1. Variously reported to be 7 feet 2 to 7-4, he has an eight-foot-plus wingspan that makes him a nightmare on defense. He is quick, and he can score too. He is averaging 22 points, 11 rebounds and 3 blocks in the French league this season for Metropolitans 92, a team based in Paris. He will not turn 20 until January and should have a huge upside.

Unusually, prognosticators who think a lot about the draft are starting to come to a consensus on Picks 2 through 4 as well. Those look likely to be guard Scoot Henderson, who averaged 17 points a game with the G League Ignite; forward Brandon Miller of the University of Alabama; and guard Amen Thompson, who played with the City Reapers of Overtime Elite.

But that could change depending on which team gets what pick, and stocks could rise and fall over the next month.

What about the college player of the year, Zach Edey of Purdue?

Despite his outstanding season, Edey is not rated highly by N.B.A. scouts. At a bulky 7-4, he looks like a classic N.B.A. center, but his inability to score from outside does not seem to fit the modern game. He could go somewhere in the second round.

If my team gets the top pick, we're set, right?

Players like Tim Duncan, LeBron James and Anthony Davis all went No. 1, and Wembanyama looks surefire.

But Greg Oden, Anthony Bennett and Ben Simmons also all went No. 1, a humbling reminder not to start counting championships just yet.

THE NEW YORK TIMES CLASSIFIED LISTINGS

IN PRINT & ONLINE AT NYTIMES.COM

AUCTION SALES

1-800-631-8275

NOTICE OF UCC PUBLIC AUCTION SALE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that in accordance with applicable provisions of the Uniform Commercial Code of the States of Delaware, Pennsylvania and New York (as applicable), TCM CRE REIT LLC, a Delaware limited liability company (the "**Secured Party**"), will sell at public auction all limited liability company interests held by Penn Treaty Mezz Borrower LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, Waterview Grande, L.P., a Pennsylvania limited partnership, 800 North Delaware Mezz Borrower LLC, a Delaware limited liability company and 1 Brown Street Mezz Borrower LLC, a Delaware limited liability company (collectively, "**Pledgor**"), in 1 Brown Street Associates, L.P., a Pennsylvania limited partnership, 800 North Delaware Avenue Associates, L.P., a Pennsylvania limited partnership, 1 Brown Street Owner LLC, a Delaware limited liability company and 800 North Delaware Owner LLC, a Delaware limited liability company (collectively, the "**Pledged Entity**"; such interests, the "**Equity Interests**"). The Equity Interests secure indebtedness owing by Pledgor to Secured Party in a principal amount of not less than $9,372,083.66 plus unpaid interest, attorneys' fees and other charges including the costs to sell the Equity Interests ("**Debt**").

Secured Party's understanding, without making any representation or warranty as to accuracy or completeness, is that the principal asset of the Pledged Entity is the real property located at One Brown Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and 800 North Delaware Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (the "Property").

The public auction sale ("**Public Sale**") will be held by virtual bidding via Zoom and/or at Secured Party's sole option, in-person in the offices of Sills, Cummis & Gross, P.C., 101 Park Avenue, 28th Floor, New York, New York 10178. The URL address and password for the online video conference will be provided to all confirmed participants that have properly registered for the Public Sale. The Public Sale will be conducted by auctioneer Matthew D. Mannion, of Mannion Auctions, LLC, New York City Division of Consumer Affairs Licensed Auctioneer, License No. 1434494.

At the Public Sale, Secured Party reserves the right to: (i) credit bid up to the amount of the Debt; (ii) set minimum price(s) for the Equity Interests; (iii) reject bids, in whole or in part; (iv) cancel or adjourn the Public Sale, in whole or in part; and (v) establish the terms and conditions of the Public Sale ("**Terms of Public Sale**") which shall comply with all restrictions and obligations pursuant to that certain Intercreditor Agreement dated as of October 15, 2020 by and between Secured Party and the holder of the mortgage encumbering the Property.

Prospective and winning bidder(s) will be required to represent in writing to Secured Party that they will adhere to the Terms of Public Sale and are purchasing the Equity Interests for their own account, not acquiring them with a view toward the sale or distribution thereof and will not resell the Equity Interests unless pursuant to a valid registration under applicable federal and/or state securities laws, or a valid exemption from the registration thereunder. The Equity Interests have not been registered under such securities laws and cannot be sold by the winning bidder(s) without registration or application of a valid exemption. The Equity Interests will be offered for sale at the Public Auction "as-is, where-is", and there are no express or implied warranties or representations relating to title, possession, quiet enjoyment, merchantability, fitness, or the like as to the Equity Interests. THIS NOTICE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN OFFER TO SELL, NOR THE SOLICITATION OF AN OFFER TO BUY, THE DISPOSITION ASSETS TO OR FROM ANYONE IN ANY JURISDICTION IN WHICH SUCH AN OFFER OR SOLICITATION IS NOT AUTHORIZED.

All bids (other than credit bids of the Secured Party) must be for cash, and the successful bidder must be prepared to deliver immediately available good funds in the amount of twenty percent (20%) of the successful bid within 24 hours after the sale, with the balance to be delivered within five business (5) days of the Public Sale and otherwise comply with the bidding requirements, including the payment of all transfer taxes, stamp duties and similar taxes incurred in connection with the purchase of the Equity Interests.

Parties interested in bidding on the Equity Interests must contact Brock Cannon, Secured Party's broker, NEWMARK ("**Broker**), via email at NewmarkUCCTeam@ngkf.com. Upon execution of a standard non-disclosure agreement, additional documentation and information will be available. Interested parties who do not contact Broker and register before the Public Sale will not be permitted to participate in bidding at the Public Sale. Additional information can be found at https://rimarketplace.com/listing/33364/ucc-foreclosure-sale-multifamily-philadelphia-pa.

Show you care.

Every purchase supports New York Times journalism.

nytimes.com/store



T Store

MARSHAL/ SHERIFF SALES

3650

MARSHAL EXECUTION SALE
PUBLIC AUCTION
RE: Parking Violations Vs Various Judgment Debtors I Will Sell At Public Auction for City Marshal Bernard Blake By Arthur Vigar Auctioneer On Thursday, May 18, 2023 at 11:30 AM At Breen Brothers Towing 566 Industrial Loop, S.I., N.Y., 10309
All R/T/I in & to the Following Vehicles:

04 VW	3VWCK21C84M403106
07 LEXUS	JTHBJ460972029771
05 HONDA	5N1AA08B25N733342
03 CADILLAC	1G6KE57Y33U216959
09 CHEVR	3GNCA13B69S635556
03 CHEVR	1GNFK16Z23J278145
04 NISSAN	1N4ABA41E54C833990
04 ACURA	2HNYD18264H507869
06 HONDA	5FNRL38736B103375
00 TOYOTA	4T3ZF13C0YU311985
06 JEEP	1J8HG48K96C272462
07 AUDI	WA1BY74LX7D047001
17 HONDA	2HGFC2F71HH553010
08 HONDA	2HGFA16558H340916
93 FORD	1FTEF14Y1PNB28335
02 DODGE	2B4GP44302R789438
07 NISSAN	1N4BA41E67C863164
18 BMW	WBAJA7C55JG907270
11 KIA	KNDJT2A21B7247139
07 JEEP	1J4GK48K57W642110
11 MITSUB	JA4AR4AU7BZ005966
14 GMC	1GKKVPKD4EJ258546
10 FORD	3FAHP0HA8AR117182
06 NISSAN	3N1CB51D96L485565
17 MERCED	WDDZF4KB7HA181511
11 SUBARU	4S3BMBG66B3242442
07 CHEVR	1GCFG15X271248594
13 NISSAN	1N4AL3AP8DN544172
05 FORD	1FMCU93105KC06825
10 AUDI	WAUFFAFL2AN014872
20 GMC	1GTGC24R6YR100914
12 FORD	1FAHP3K20CL322953
10 NISSAN	1N4AA5AP0AC870198
Following Vehicles Sold With Liens	
17 HYUNDAI	5NPE24AF4HH532117
20 MERCEDES	WIN4M4HB3LW046161
19 NISSAN	3N1AN7AP3KY294640
17 V W	WVGSV7AX2HK004271
07 BMW	WBAVA37527NE28350
16 NISSAN	1N4AL3AP7GN325238
15 NISSAN	JN8AS5MV8FW758812
15 MITSUB	JA32U2FU0FU007405
13 HYUNDAI	5NPDH4AE5DH311024
14 DODGE	1C6RR7LT6ES266301
11 BMW	WBAPH7G51BNM54410
Following Vehicles Sold As Salvage	
00 HONDA	1HGCG5656YA030149
08 TOY (Lien)	4T1BK36B98U280739

CASH ONLY Inspect ½ Hr Prior to Sale
City Marshal Bernard Blake
Badge #63 Phone(718)528-4584

PUBLIC AUCTION SALE
RE: NYC Parking Violations Bureau Vs. Various Judgment Debtors I will sell at Public Auction for City Marshal Kenneth Giachetta By Stuart L. Medow, CAI Auctioneer on Thursday, May 18, 2023 at 10AM At Ken Ben Industries 1908 Shore Pkwy, Brooklyn, N.Y., 11214, the right, title and interest of the judgment debtors in & to the Following Vehicles:

21 NISSAN	3N1AB8CV8MY220554LIEN
15 DODGE	2C3CDXCT1FH759863LIEN
15 GMC	1GKKVTKD6FJ263502LIEN
11 KIA	KNAGM4A71B5069062
10 GMC	1GKLVLED5AJ143456LIEN
16 FORD	3FA6P0H75GR345645LIEN
17 CHEVR	2GNFLEEK4H6189755LIEN
18 BMW	WBA2K1C58JVB28863
06 NISSAN	JN8AZ08W16W543757
00 CHEVR	1GBDM19W3YB186334SAL
11 KIA	KNDJT2A27B7222066
19 FORD	1FATP8UH3K5104548LIEN
14 BMW	WBA3B5G53ENS10024LIEN
15 INFINITI	JN1BV7ARXFM415072LIEN
01 FORD	1FBSS31L11HA07222
04 NISSAN	5N1AA08B04N703397
10 NISSAN	1N4AA5AP9AC825907
09 SUBARU	JF1GE61699H519848LIEN
09 HONDA	5FNRL38729B406653
19 HONDA	1HGCV1F36KA039468LIEN
12 HYUND	5NPEC4AB2CH423254LIEN
06 BMW	WBAVB13536PT04031
11 NISSAN	1N4AL2AP9BN501029
02 HONDA	JHLRD78492C060648LIEN
09 NISSAN	JN8AZ18WX9W214758
15 FORD	1FADP3F22FL230305SAL
99 FORD	2FTRX18W3XCA09666LIEN
14SUBARU	JF2GPAVC5E8293973
21 FORD	1FTBW3XG2MKA06792
11 TOYOTA	JTDKN3DU7B1368052
07 HONDA	JHMGD386X7S015695
07 TOYOTA	JTEEW21A670045103
11 ME/BE	4JGBB8GB9BA700312LIEN
08 BMW	WBAVA37508NL55641
01 INFINITI	JNKCA31A71T028332
18 SUBARU	4S3BNAC66J3016798LIEN
02 DODGE	1B7HU18Z72J117524
17 INFINITI	JN1CV7AR0HM682003LIEN
08 MAZDA	JM1BK343181127578
09 IC	4DRBUAAN79B108531
10 NISSAN	1N4AA5AP0AC867382LIEN
11 NISSAN	3N1AB6AP0BL615508
19 MAZDA	JM3KFBCM2K0563840LIEN
06 FORD	1FTNS24L66HB25319
09 INFINITI	JNKCV61FX9M360045LIEN
02 JEEP	1J4GW58S62C279322
14 HONDA	1HGCR2F59EA250227
04 MERCURY	2MRDA20274BJ03803
02GMC	1GKFK66U52J296488
09 MAZDA	JM3ER29L090221820
11 AUDI	WAUBFAFL5BN014414

CASH ONLY Inspect ½Hr. Prior to Sale
Badge #80 Tel: 718-351-4515

BASEBALL

What We Have Learned After a Quarter of the Season

By BENJAMIN HOFFMAN

There is no question that this season will go down in history as the one in which the pitch clock changed baseball. Whether it is also the season that *saved* baseball is too soon to tell, but the pitch clock's effect is real: With around a quarter of the season complete, the average game is 27 minutes shorter than it was last season and the percentage of games lasting longer than 3 hours 30 minutes has fallen off a cliff, to 0.4 percent, after having been higher than 10 percent in five of the previous six seasons.

But while everyone has been focusing on how quickly things are moving, there have been some other notable developments.

Here is what we've learned.



GAIL BURTON/ASSOCIATED PRESS

With the pitch clock, major league games are on average 27 minutes shorter than they were last season.

The very expensive Mets are in a sizable hole.

It is understandable for Mets fans to be frustrated. The team made headlines in the off-season with a Steven A. Cohen-powered spending spree that gave the franchise the highest payroll in major league history. Yet the Mets entered Monday's action at 20-21, in a tie with the Miami Marlins for third place in the National League East. Injuries have been a factor, but you could argue that the team played above its head last year and didn't improve despite all that spending — it just got more expensive.

The good news? Three wild cards in each league mean the Mets were only a half-game out of qualifying for postseason play. If Justin Verlander is full speed ahead and Max Scherzer has regained his stride after a suspension and an injury, the Mets could easily get one of those three spots — putting them in roughly the same position they were in last year when everything went right.



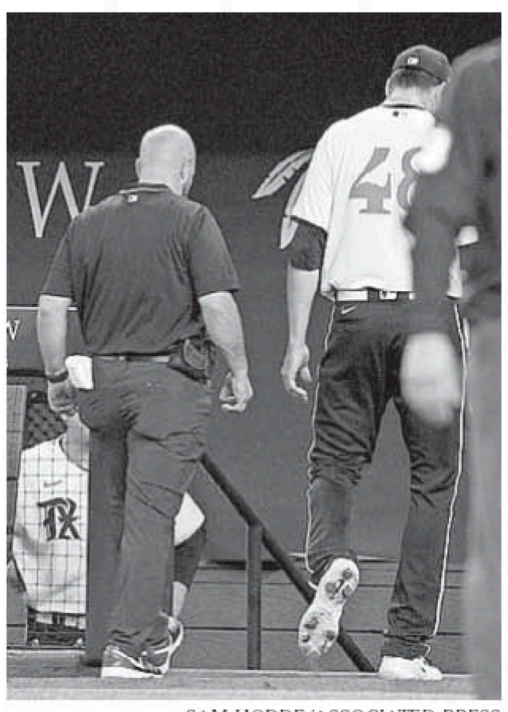
ALEX BRANDON/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Despite an off-season spending spree, the Mets are only on the edge of the National League wild card race.

Free-agent deals require patience.

There were 13 free-agent contracts this off-season that topped $75 million. The results have not been great. Because of injuries, Edwin Díaz ($102 million, Mets) and Carlos Rodón ($162 million, Yankees) have not pitched. Justin Verlander ($86.7 million, Mets) has started only two games because of his own injury, and Jacob deGrom ($185 million, Rangers) has pitched well but is on the injured list. Trea Turner ($300 million, Phillies), Carlos Correa ($200 million, Twins) and Andrew Benintendi ($75 million, White Sox) have been healthy; they have just been bad. Xander Bogaerts ($280 million, Padres) has his lowest on-base plus slugging percentage since 2017. Aaron Judge ($360 million, Yankees) had a stint on the injured list and is far behind last year's blistering home run pace.

Could those players end up living up to their contracts? Yes. But some of them won't, which is the reality of a salary structure in which many players' best years are behind them by the time they reach free agency.

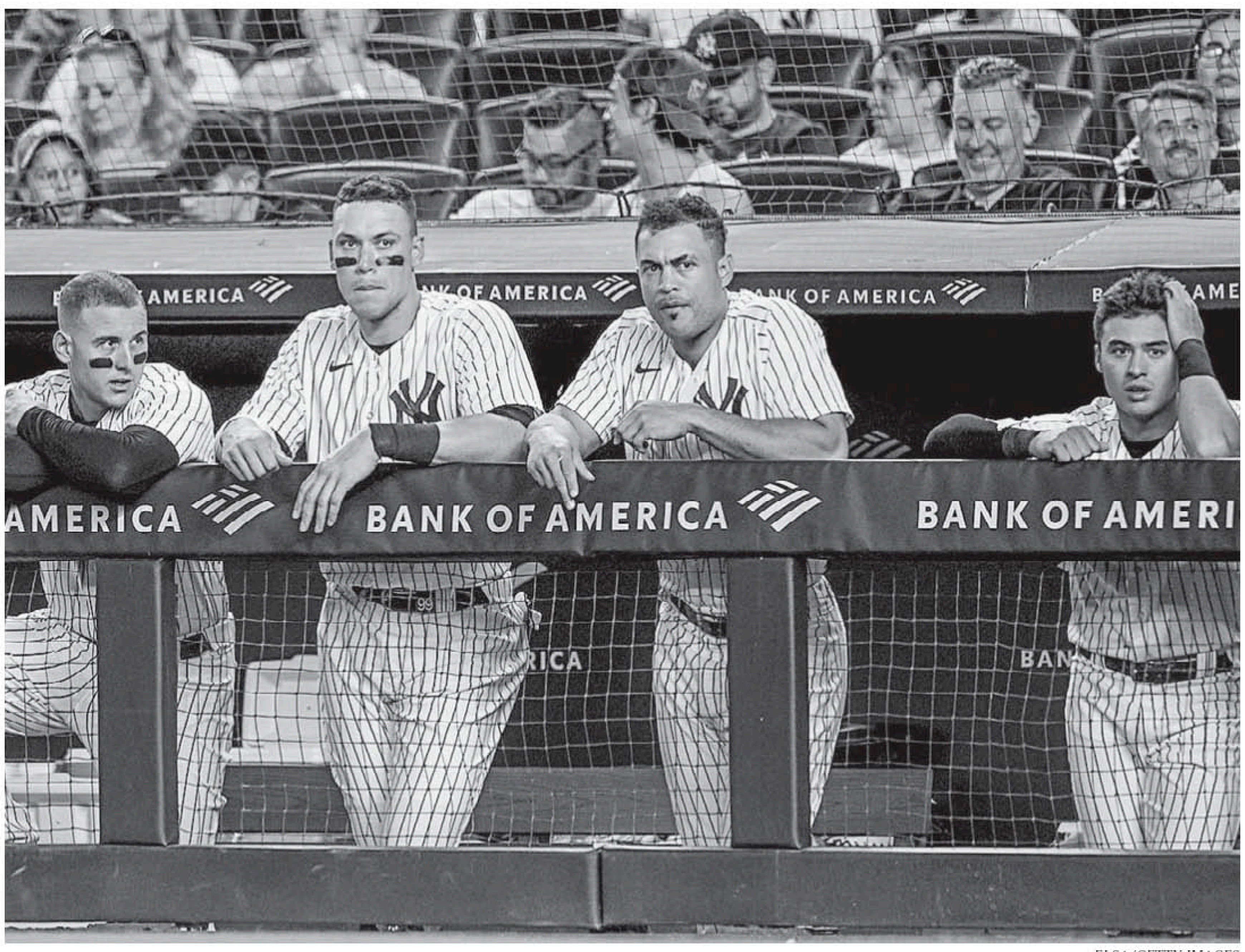


SAM HODDE/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jacob deGrom has pitched well but is on the injured list.

The Yankees are in a similar situation.

A 23-19 record through Sunday gave the Yankees bragging rights of sorts over the Mets, but because of the Tampa Bay Rays' electric start to the season, the Yankees were eight games out of first place in the American League East and entered Monday's games clinging to the third A.L. wild card by just a half-game over Boston. The silver lining is that the Yankees have done that even though two of their four best starting pitchers, Carlos Rodón and Luis Severino, have yet to pitch this season and Giancarlo Stanton and Aaron Judge have been injured.



ELSA/GETTY IMAGES

The Yankees sluggers Aaron Judge, second from left, and Giancarlo Stanton, to his left, have been injured.



ADAM HUNGER/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Carlos Rodón, a key signing, hasn't pitched for the Yanks.

It's time to cringe on a few of the deals.

After a wild off-season in which he agreed to huge contracts with the San Francisco Giants and the Mets, only to have both fall apart after the teams saw the results of his physical, Carlos Correa went back to Minnesota on a more modest, but still huge, contract. He is having by far the worst season of his career and recently said he agreed with Minnesota fans who have booed his poor play, telling reporters, "I'd boo myself too with the amount of money I'm making."

Correa's situation can't compare to the mess in St. Louis, where the last-place Cardinals tried to replace catcher Yadier Molina with Willson Contreras, who had been an All-Star for the Chicago Cubs. The downgrade defensively was apparently hard for the team to handle, as Manager Oliver Marmol set off a chain of confusing events. It was reported by The Athletic that Contreras, who signed a five-year, $87.5 million contract, was going to be moved to designated hitter and outfielder. The team then walked that back and said he would only D.H., and then reversed course over the weekend and said Contreras would be back at catcher on Monday night. Each update came without any real elaboration as to what had gone wrong, and Contreras made it clear he was not happy. As his contract doesn't expire until 2027, the situation could become really ugly.



DAVID BERDING/GETTY IMAGES

A struggling Carlos Correa said he would boo himself.

There is more than one way to build a roster.

Six very different teams entered Monday's games with a winning percentage of .600 or higher. The Rays (.738), easily the best team in baseball, are ranked 28th in payroll. They succeed by blending analytics and scouting — and possibly magic. Next up are the Baltimore Orioles (.650), ranked 29th in payroll, who have been powered by inexpensive, homegrown players. The Los Angeles Dodgers (.634), a perennial powerhouse, have the third-best record and the fifth-highest payroll. The surprising Texas Rangers (.625) invested heavily in free agency to get where they are, and the Atlanta Braves (.625) have showed a knack for developing talent and then retaining that talent on team-friendly deals. The Toronto Blue Jays (.600) round out the group as a mix of all of the above, having developed several stars through international scouting and the draft, while also spending market rate money on a few free agents.



ELSA/GETTY IMAGES

The Rays are dominating despite ranking only 28th in payroll.

Stolen bases are cool again.

It is not quite the explosion some predicted, but steals are up this year after M.L.B. increased the size of the bases and put restrictions on how often pitchers could attempt pickoffs. Through 42 games, Esteury Ruiz of the Oakland Athletics stole 18 bases, putting him on a pace for 69 over a full season. There has not been even a 50-steal season since 2017, and the last 70-steal season was in 2009. Ruiz, a bright spot on a bad Oakland roster, has company: Ronald Acuña Jr. of the Atlanta Braves, having recovered his elite sprint speed after an anterior cruciate ligament tear in 2021, had 17 steals through Sunday.



LACHLAN CUNNINGHAM/GETTY IMAGES

Esteury Ruiz of the Athletics is on pace to steal 69 bases.



JEROME MIRON/USA TODAY SPORTS

Catchers like J.T. Realmuto are starting to lower steal rates.

Catchers are adjusting.

Players ran like wild on the first two days of the season, with catchers allowing an 86.1 percent success rate, raising fears that M.L.B. had overcorrected. The rate of attempts has stayed high, but catchers have adjusted: They allowed a success rate of 79 percent in April and 76.3 percent in May. That would still be an improvement for base runners, and it continues a trend in which runners were successful more than 75 percent of the time in each of the previous two seasons.

Bill Oesterle, 57, Who Improved Homes Through Angie's List, Dies



CHARLIE NYE/THE STAR, VIA USA TODAY NETWORK

Bill Oesterle in 2015. He and Angie Hicks started Angie's List, which drew millions of subscribers.

By DANIEL E. SLOTNIK

Bill Oesterle, a founder and the longtime chief executive of the popular home improvement review website Angie's List and a former player in Indiana Republican politics, died on Wednesday at his home in Indianapolis. He was 57.

His assistant, Jackie Annan, said the cause was complications of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

Mr. Oesterle (pronounced OST-er-lee) was a venture capitalist when he founded Angie's List, in Columbus, Ohio, in 1995 with Angie Hicks, a recent college graduate who had worked with him. The idea was to connect subscribers with trustworthy contractors and other home improvement professionals, removing some of the anxiety of hiring a stranger for expensive home repairs.

The business, originally called Columbus Neighbors, was a hyperlocal affair: Ms. Hicks signed up new subscribers by going door to door and provided referrals over the phone, consulting an actual list that had to be updated whenever a company's rating changed. The service spread the word even further by advertising in newspapers, and the name became Angie's List in 1996.

In 1999, with the dot-com boom near its apogee, Angie's List moved online. The site, which still charged a subscription fee and also made money through advertising, rated different businesses from A to F in categories like punctuality and professionalism. It also allowed users to write signed reviews about different businesses in their area, which Angie's List hoped would make reviews fairer and more accurate. (Users' entire names did not appear, but they did have to provide them to the company.)

Businesses that received bad reviews could try to settle the issue with customers who complained through Angie's List; if the business ignored the complaint resolution process or failed to resolve a complaint, it could be placed in the Penalty Box, a kind of online pillory, and temporarily lose its listing on the site. Widely praised businesses earned a Super Service Award, as well as greater attention on the site.

Mr. Oesterle became chief executive in 1999, when Ms. Hicks left to attend Harvard Business School. (She later returned in a different capacity.) In time the company employed more than 2,000 workers, mainly based in Indianapolis during Mr. Oesterle's tenure, and developed a user base of millions in dozens of cities across the United States.

Co-founding a review site to ease repairs, and playing a key role in Indiana politics.

In 2004, Mr. Oesterle stepped away to run Mitch Daniels's first campaign for governor. He had known Mr. Daniels, who was then director of the Office of Management and Budget under President George W. Bush, for years. Mr. Oesterle raised millions of dollars for the campaign while having Mr. Daniels tour the state in an R.V., ride a motorcycle and stay overnight with constituents to demonstrate that he was a man of the people.

Mr. Daniels won handily, beating the Democratic incumbent, Joseph Kernan, with more than 53 percent of the vote. (Mr. Daniels went on to win a second term.)

But Mr. Oesterle turned against the Indiana Republican establishment in 2015, when Mr. Daniels's successor as governor, Mike Pence, signed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, a law that critics contended would allow Indiana businesses to discriminate against L.G.B.T.Q. people.

Mr. Oesterle told The Indianapolis Star that he thought the bill would damage the state's economy and the Republican Party.

"People born gay aren't born Democratic," he said. "They are predominantly Democratic because we moved them there."

The law drew an outcry from many Hoosiers, politicians in other states as well as business leaders like Tim Cook of Apple. Thousands protested at the statehouse.

Mr. Oesterle threatened to cancel a $40 million deal to expand Angie's List's headquarters in Indianapolis, leave his job as chief executive to focus on gay rights in Indiana, and support a challenger to Mr. Pence. He had earlier donated $150,000 to the Pence campaign.

After the uproar, Indiana lawmakers passed an amendment intended to protect L.G.B.T.Q. people from discrimination. But Angie's List never built its Indianapolis expansion.

The company went public in 2011 but struggled financially after a promising initial public offering. Mr. Oesterle stepped down as chief executive in 2015, and in 2017 Angie's List was acquired for about $500 million by IAC, a digital media group controlled by the entrepreneur Barry Diller. IAC merged the company with its HomeAdvisor service. Angie's List is now known as Angi.

William Seelye Oesterle was born on Sept. 26, 1965, in Lafayette, Ind., northwest of Indianapolis. He was the youngest of five children of Eric Oesterle, an agricultural economics professor at Purdue University, and Germaine (Seelye) Oesterle, who studied horticulture at Cornell University before they married.

Mr. Oesterle grew up in West Lafayette, where he graduated from high school in 1983. He earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Purdue in 1987 and took a fellowship with Gov. Robert Orr.

After about a year, Mr. Oesterle was hired by the Hudson Institute, a think tank that at the time was led by Mr. Daniels and headquartered in Indianapolis. He was later accepted to Harvard Business School. But before Mr. Oesterle left, Mr. Daniels had a conversation with him.

"He pointed a finger at my chest and said: 'You'd better come back here. You owe it to us,'" Mr. Oesterle recalled in 2021.

He completed his master's degree at Harvard in the early 1990s, and in 1991 he married Melissa McCain. Their marriage ended in divorce.

Mr. Oesterle went to work for a private equity firm in Columbus, Ohio, where he met Ms. Hicks, a recent graduate of DePauw University.

Inspired by a newsletter service in Indianapolis that helped people find plumbers and other home-repair specialists, Mr. Oesterle and Ms. Hicks started working out of his garage. Once the company began to take off, they named it after Ms. Hicks, bought the service that had originally inspired them and eventually moved their headquarters to Indianapolis.

Mr. Oesterle married Kristi English in 2007. She survives him, as do four children from his first marriage, Maggie Shipman, Katie Smith, Fischer Oesterle and Emma Oesterle; a stepdaughter, Kayla English; a daughter from his second marriage, Luella Oesterle; two brothers, Eric and Dale; two sisters, Elizabeth and Mary Ellen Oesterle; and three grandchildren.

In 2002, Mr. Oesterle helped create the Orr Fellowship, named after Governor Orr, which brings up to 90 new college graduates to Indianapolis to work for major companies for two years.

The fellowship was the first of many efforts Mr. Oesterle undertook to keep talented, educated workers from leaving Indiana.

He started a business to address the problem, MakeMyMove, which works with towns and cities in Indiana and other states to offer incentives for remote workers to move to those communities.

Thomas Stacy, 84, Who Made the English Horn Sing Like a Human Voice



ANDREA MOHIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES



RICHARD TERMINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Thomas Stacy in 1999, left, and with the pianist Hélène Grimaud in 2007. He was a famed virtuoso on an uncommon instrument.

By NEIL GENZLINGER

Thomas Stacy sometimes told the story of how, when he was a boy growing up in Arkansas, an Italian who had been dead for about 80 years changed his life.

He'd been studying piano with his mother, but when he heard a piece of music by the composer Gioachino Antonio Rossini, his focus shifted to a different instrument and he determined to make a career of it.

"I was fascinated by the sound of the oboe on a record we had of the overture to Rossini's opera 'The Silken Ladder,'" Mr. Stacy recalled in a 1996 interview with The Associated Press. "I knew then that I wanted to be a musician."

If the oboe was a somewhat unusual selection for a young musician, Mr. Stacy soon made the even more unconventional choice to specialize in the English horn, a confusingly named instrument that is not in fact a horn but rather a double-reed instrument, an alto member of the oboe family.

In the ensuing decades he became one of the finest English horn virtuosos in the United States; he played with the New York Philharmonic for almost 40 years, appeared as a guest soloist all over the country and beyond, and contributed to countless recordings. Numerous composers wrote works specifically for him, and he became something of an ambassador for his uncommon instrument — performing all-English-horn programs, leading an annual summer seminar and encouraging an expansion of the repertory.

Mr. Stacy died on April 30 in hospice care in Southampton, N.Y. He was 84. His son Barton Stacy said the cause was heart failure.

Mr. Stacy was also an expert on the oboe d'amore, a Baroque-era instrument with a mezzo-soprano range. At some recitals he would switch among English horn, oboe d'amore and traditional oboe. Whatever he was playing, critics praised his tone and his dexterity.

"Mellifluous melancholy is the English horn's main orchestral stock in trade," John Henken wrote in The Los Angeles Times in 1988, reviewing a recital at Trinity Lutheran Church in Reseda, Calif., where Mr. Stacy played the other two instruments as well, "but Stacy demonstrated a much wider range of expression and sound. He could make the horn sing with almost human suavity, or stutter with martial brilliance, all supported by the booming acoustic of the Trinity sanctuary."

An expansive range of expression in decades with the New York Philharmonic.

As for why he chose the English horn as his main instrument, Mr. Stacy had a simple answer.

"It is most like the human voice," he said in the 1996 interview, "and has the most expressive potential in a more expressive range than other instruments."

Thomas Jefferson Stacy was born on Aug. 15, 1938, in Little Rock, Ark. His father, also named Thomas, was a farmer and cotton broker, and his mother, Nora Lee (Conditt) Stacy, was a homemaker and church organist.

He grew up in Augusta, Ark., a small city northeast of Little Rock, and started his musical training on the piano, violin and clarinet before settling on the oboe and then zeroing in on the English horn. When he was 14, he sold his motorcycle in order to buy one.

"It wasn't a Harley or anything," he told The New York Times in 1999, "just a small, lightweight motorcycle."

He largely taught himself to play the oboe and English horn, using a book that showed the fingerings. He was 17 and still a junior in high school when the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y., gave him a full scholarship.

"I started out on oboe at Eastman," he said, "but I also played English horn in some of the performing groups. It was already my preference. It fits my musical persona like a glove."

While at Eastman he met a fellow student, Marie Elizabeth Mann. They married in 1960, the same year that both graduated and that Mr. Stacy joined the New Orleans Philharmonic. He later played with the San Antonio Symphony and the Minnesota Orchestra before joining the New York Philharmonic in 1972.

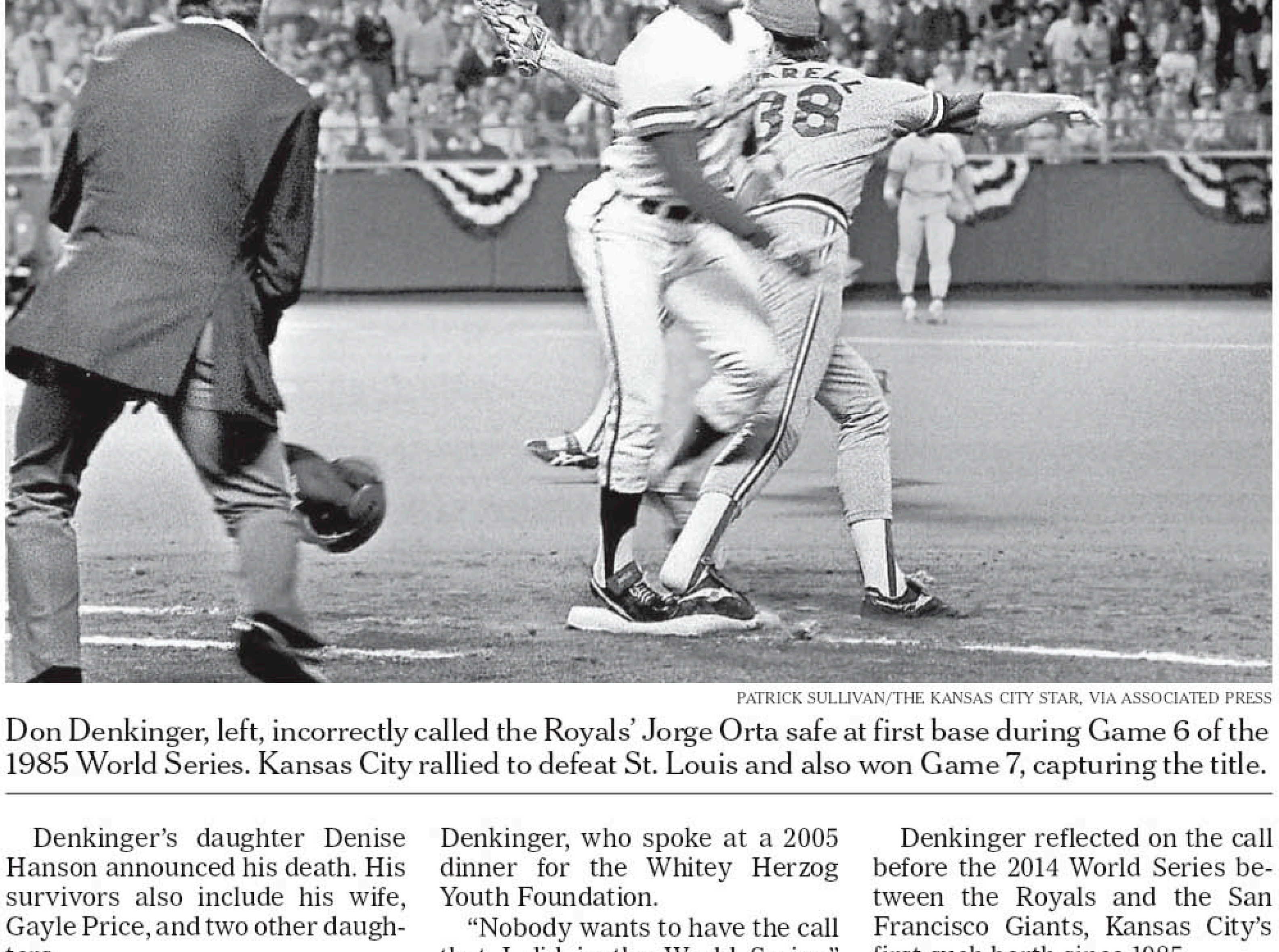
He appeared as soloist with the Philharmonic more than 70 times before leaving in the fall of 2010. By then a number of works had been written specifically with him in mind, including Ned Rorem's Concerto for English Horn and Orchestra, which had its world premiere at Avery Fisher Hall in Manhattan in 1994. Alex Ross, reviewing the performance in The Times, found parts of the work "curiously fragmentary and unfocused." But, he added, "Mr. Stacy tied these disparate impressions together with a rich tone and dazzling technique."

In addition to his wife and his son Barton, Mr. Stacy, who lived in Hampton Bays, N.Y., is survived by another son, Phillip, and two grandchildren.

In the 1996 interview, Mr. Stacy talked about how a musician of his caliber stayed sharp.

"The better you are, the harder it is to improve," he said, "and that's what I think about most, how to improve. It's like chipping golf balls to the green with an 8-iron. You must practice the starting and stopping of notes so they sound good."

Don Denkinger, 86, a Precise Umpire Remembered for One Very Big Mistake



PATRICK SULLIVAN/THE KANSAS CITY STAR, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

Don Denkinger, left, incorrectly called the Royals' Jorge Orta safe at first base during Game 6 of the 1985 World Series. Kansas City rallied to defeat St. Louis and also won Game 7, capturing the title.

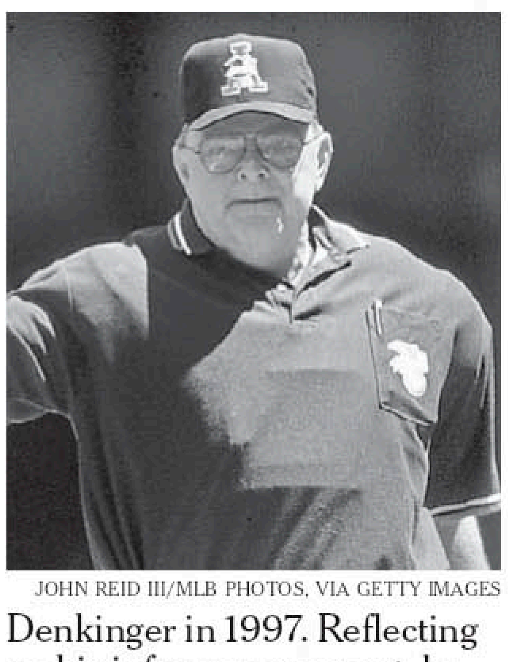
By RICHARD GOLDSTEIN

Don Denkinger was regarded as one of the finest major league umpires of his time. Working in the American League from 1969 to 1998, he was assigned to four World Series and three All-Star Games.

But when Denkinger died on Friday in Waterloo, Iowa, at 86, he was remembered mostly for his famously botched call on baseball's greatest stage.

In 1985, Denkinger was umpiring at first base in Game 6 of the World Series between the St. Louis Cardinals and the Kansas City Royals. The Cardinals were on the brink of capturing the championship, leading the Royals by three games to two and ahead by 1-0 with no one out in the bottom of the ninth inning. The Royals' Jorge Orta, who led off, hit a bouncer to the Cardinals' first baseman, Jack Clark. Clark flipped the ball to the pitcher, Todd Worrell, who was covering the bag.

Denkinger called Orta safe, though he was out by about a step. There was no television instant replay: Major League Baseball did not begin using the technology until 2008. So Denkinger's obvious missed call stood, infuriating the Cardinal manager, Whitey Herzog, his players and their fans.



JOHN REID III/MLB PHOTOS, VIA GETTY IMAGES

Denkinger in 1997. Reflecting on his infamous moment, he said, "It's part of history."

A 30-year career with accolades, as well as a pivotal botched call in the 1985 World Series.

After what became known as "the call," the Royals staged a rally that culminated with the pinch-hitter Dane Iorg's singling for a 2-1 victory that forced Game 7. Kansas City trounced the presumably dispirited Cardinals, 11-0, the next night to capture the World Series title.

During the off-season, Denkinger received death threats. His Iowa home was given police protection, and the F.B.I. investigated some of the most troubling notes he received.

Years later, in 2015, he told Sports Illustrated how he had come to make the call that would define his career. "I was in good position, but Worrell is tall, the throw was high, and I couldn't watch his glove and his feet at the same time. It was a soft toss, and there was so much crowd noise, I couldn't hear the ball hit the glove."

Donald Anton Denkinger was born on Aug. 28, 1936, in Cedar Falls, Iowa. He attended Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, and joined its wrestling team. He served in the Army from 1957 to 1959, then began umpiring in the minor leagues in 1960. He worked the World Series in 1974, 1980, 1985 and 1991.

He was behind the plate for the 1978 Yankees-Boston Red Sox tiebreaking game for the A.L. pennant, and for Game 7 of the 1991 World Series, when the Minnesota Twins' Jack Morris pitched a 10-inning shutout to best the Atlanta Braves, 1-0. In 1990, he called balls and strikes when Nolan Ryan threw his sixth no-hitter. His final game was in Kansas City's Kauffman Stadium on June 2, 1998. He retired after the season because of an ailing right knee.

Denkinger's daughter Denise Hanson announced his death. His survivors also include his wife, Gayle Price, and two other daughters.

Denkinger appeared at sports memorabilia shows, including one in St. Louis, and autographed photos of "the call" for fans. He kept a framed photo of "the call" at his home, and he displayed a painting depicting it at a restaurant he owned in Waterloo. Over the years Herzog reconciled with Denkinger, who spoke at a 2005 dinner for the Whitey Herzog Youth Foundation.

"Nobody wants to have the call that I did in the World Series," Denkinger told The Associated Press in 2014. "But I did. And now it's part of history."

"I'm not tired of talking about it," he added. "I mean, it happened. It's just that if the same thing happened now, they'd get it right on replay, and it'd be over with."

Denkinger reflected on the call before the 2014 World Series between the Royals and the San Francisco Giants, Kansas City's first such berth since 1985.

"It's life, and it goes on," MLB.com quoted him as saying. "I'm obviously reminded constantly that I made a mistake. You know what? I was an umpire for more than 30 years in the major leagues. I know I made a lot of mistakes. That one was just blown out of proportion."



TONY KORODY/SYGMA, VIA GETTY IMAGES



ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

Doyle Brunson, nicknamed Texas Dolly, wrote a definitive guide to Texas hold 'em and other games. Mr. Brunson, right, in Las Vegas in 2006, won 10 World Series of Poker events in his career.

Doyle Brunson, Colorful Cowboy Atop the World of Poker, Dies at 89

By KATHLEEN McELROY

Doyle Brunson, a champion poker player who, in a long, lucrative and colorful career with a deck of cards, won 10 World Series of Poker events, including two back-to-back titles, and influenced countless players with his definitive guide to Texas hold 'em and other games, died on Sunday in Las Vegas. He was 89.

His death was confirmed by his daughter-in-law, Anjela Brunson.

On his website, Mr. Brunson was once immodestly described as "the Babe Ruth, the Michael Jordan, and the Arnold Palmer of poker."

The comparisons were apt. The first person to win $1 million in tournament play, Mr. Brunson — nicknamed Texas Dolly — became a star to a new generation when poker became a fixture on television in the 1990s, his cowboy hat and no-nonsense drawl a gentlemanly foil to brash, talkative younger players.

"The testosterone that floods most of today's games owes its existence to Brunson's philosophy of attack, the outlaw whiff of his style, the cowboy jingle-jangle of his prose," Sports Illustrated wrote in 2005.

Mr. Brunson, whose career in poker began in illegal games in the back rooms of Texas bars, won the World Series of Poker main event, the sport's most coveted prize, in 1976 and 1977. His total tournament winnings exceeded $6 million.

Since the 1960s, he had presided over a high-stakes private cash game in Las Vegas known as "The Big Game," reserved for the most fearless and well-financed poker players as well as wealthy amateurs.

Mr. Brunson "bridges the span between the dangerous road games of the 1950s and the safely legitimate mountains of money in the 21st century," the poker journalist James McManus wrote in "Cowboys Full: The Story of Poker" (2009).

When Mr. Brunson won the World Series of Poker main event, he wrote that people thought of him more as a professional gambler than a poker player. He acknowledged that he had made millions and lost much of it early on betting on other sports, especially golf.

But he became famous for winning at poker and then teaching it, especially no-limit Texas hold 'em, a variation of the game that he first played in 1958, when it was becoming popular in his home state.

Doyle Frank Brunson was born on Aug. 10, 1933, and grew up in Longworth, in north central Texas, the youngest of three children of John and Mealia Brunson. His father was a farmer and cotton gin manager, his mother a homemaker. Doyle did not learn until his mid-20s that his father had secretly put his first two children through college by playing poker.

Initially an undersize basketball player, Doyle grew about six inches in a year and helped lead Sweetwater High School, in nearby Sweetwater, to the state tournament in Austin. The night before the semifinal game (which his team lost), schoolmates introduced him to poker, which he had seen played only in movies.

He also excelled at baseball and track. After missing the deadline to accept a full scholarship to the University of Texas, he attended the Baptist-affiliated Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene and started playing poker there. Five times he faced a school disciplinary board for gambling but avoided suspension because of his success as an athlete.

From bars in Texas to championships and millions of dollars.

After almost leading Hardin-Simmons to the N.C.A.A. basketball tournament, Mr. Brunson landed a summer job at the local gypsum plant. His athletic career was ended when a stack of Sheetrock fell on him, mangling his right leg.

He earned a master's degree in education while playing poker for income. But shocked at how little school administrators were paid, he decided against an educator's career and took a job selling business equipment. While making a sales call on a pool hall in Fort Worth, he stumbled on a poker game, joined it and in three hours equaled his month's salary. He quit his job and started a life of illegal poker in Texas.

Mr. Brunson soon joined a betting partnership with Thomas Preston Jr., better known as Amarillo Slim, and Brian Roberts, known as Sailor, in which they shared bankrolls until they lost all their money in Las Vegas in 1970. Each of them would eventually win the World Series of Poker main event.

In 1962, Mr. Brunson married Louise Carter, a Fort Worth pharmacist. She survives him, along with their son, Todd; their daughter, Pamela Brunson; a stepdaughter, Cheryl Carter; a grandson; a step-grandson; four step-great-grandchildren; and one step-great-great-grandson. His first child, Doyla Brunson, died in 1982. Mr. Brunson died at a hospital in Las Vegas and had lived in the city for several decades.

Mr. Brunson was among the three dozen players invited in 1970 to the inaugural World Series of Poker, a name that belied its modest beginnings. The tournament was the brainchild of the casino owner Benny Binion and Jimmy Snyder, then a public relations agent better known as Jimmy the Greek.

The World Series expanded its roster of poker contests to include several variants of the game, but Texas hold 'em remained the most publicized and lucrative event. Mr. Snyder called Mr. Brunson "Texas Doy-lee," which reporters mistook for Dolly, and the nickname Texas Dolly stuck, though it seemed incongruous for someone who stood 6 feet 3 inches tall and weighed well over 250 pounds.

After moving to Las Vegas in 1973 for steadier gambling opportunities, Mr. Brunson won the tournament's main event in 1976 and 1977, widely viewed as the world championship, earning $560,000 in a winner-take-all format. His 10 World Series bracelets are tied for second behind Phil Hellmuth's 16.

In 1978, he self-published his book "How I Made Over $1,000,000 Playing Poker," which included chapters by other top pros. Later renamed "Super System: A Course in Power Poker" when it was picked up by B & G Publishing in 2002, the book and its follow-up, "Super System 2," remain top-selling poker manuals.

"As a postgraduate guide to the intricacies of high-level, high-stakes poker the work has no equal," wrote the English poet Al Alvarez, who covered the 1981 World Series of Poker for The New Yorker. "The grammar may be shaky in places, the punctuation baroque, but the voice is distinct and the message is clear: aggression, constant aggression."

Mr. Brunson was inducted into the World Series of Poker Hall of Fame in 1988.

After steady growth, poker had its cultural moment in 1998 with the release of the film "Rounders," in which Matt Damon's poker-playing character recites Brunson maxims while wielding a copy of "Super System." That same year, poker became a late-night and cable television staple, and Mr. Brunson became a familiar figure.

Competitive into his later years, Mr. Brunson won a 2004 legends event on the World Poker Tour and $1.2 million. In 2005, he won a hold 'em event for his 10th World Series title.

A few days earlier, his son Todd, also a professional player, had captured an event, making them the first father and son to each win at the World Series. Mr. Brunson reached the fourth day of the 2013 Poker Players Championship, though he confessed that the game was taking its toll.

"Sometimes, when I've been playing for a couple of days, I get into a position where I'm uncomfortable," he said. "My leg, say, starts hurting a little bit. But I don't change position. I'll sit there and let it hurt, just as a reminder to make myself play good."

He was still playing poker in Las Vegas in 2022. "Watching Doyle Brunson play poker at the Bellagio is like watching Tiger Woods play Augusta," Joe Levin wrote in a profile in Texas Monthly last July.

Mr. Brunson thought that his legacy would be "the fact that I've played longer at the high levels than anybody else ever did," he said in 2003. "I mean, I've been playing at the high levels — the biggest games I could find — ever since I was 23 years old."

But he would not milk his age for sympathy.

"Would I like to win the World Series again for the old guys?" he said in 2002. "Nah, I'd like to win it for ol' Doyle."

Alex Traub contributed reporting.

Deaths

Banks, Henry
Bernstein, Naomi
Blumberg, Harvey
Brown, Arline
Douglas, Leonard
Goldstein, Lyn
Gross, Robert
Lago, Gregory
Mintzer, Arlene
Rosen, David
Schwat, Lynn
Winans, Pauline

BANKS—Dr. Henry H.
The partners, counsel, associates and staff of the firm of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP express profound sorrow at the death on May 13 of Dr. Henry H. Banks, beloved father of our friend and special counsel, Steven Banks. We express our deepest sympathies to Steve and his wife Judge Jean Schneider and their children, Harry and Katie Banks, and Susanna Banks and Lloyd Lesperance, and the entire Banks family. Contributions may be made to the Judith R. and Henry H. Banks MD Scholarship Fund at Tufts University School of Medicine, 136 Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA 02111. medicine-giving@tufts.edu.

BERNSTEIN—Naomi (nee Mittleman).
November 7, 1936 - May 12, 2023. Died peacefully in her sleep after a long illness. A lifelong New Yorker, Ms. Bernstein was active in the Bronx Democratic Club where she was a vocal advocate for the Bronx. Her career began as a fundraiser for the National Asthma Center and quickly moved her skills to the Jewish Guild for the Blind. After a brief career on the marketing team for Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, she became the Communications Director for The New York City Board of Elections where she stayed as the voice (and face) of the Board until she retired. A former beauty queen, she enjoyed working as a full- figured model whose face illuminated campaigns for Macy's, Talbot, and Family Circle. Ms. Bernstein was a proud card-carrying member of the Screen Actors Guild and lent her talents recording for the Jewish Institute for the Blind. She also remained a dedicated member of the Riverdale Temple until her illness. She leaves her legacy in her children, Jennifer Murphy (Bruce Carroll), Dana Kuznetzkoff (Carl Monte), Jeffrey T. Bernstein (Kristin) and stepchildren, Michael Bernstein (Casey), Resa Scalone and Leslie Bernstein (Jon Blum), as well as her four grandchildren: Jeremiah Murphy, Kevin Michael Murphy, Emily Bernstein and Sadie Bernstein and seven stepgrandchildren: Jesse Bernstein, Heather Bernstein, Aaron Bernstein, Daniel Scalone, Jessica Scalone, Ian Carroll and Emma Carroll. In addition to her children, she is survived by her sister Maxine Dorn (Sy), her nieces, nephews and many grandnieces and nephews. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her name to the Alzheimer's Association.

BLUMBERG—Dr. Harvey.
Dr. Harvey Blumberg passed away peacefully Saturday, May 13th in hospice at Lenox Hill Hospital. Dr. Blumberg was born in Brooklyn, NY and graduated from the Bronx High School of Science. He served in the U.S. Army and the NYC Fire Department. He held a Ph.D. from CUNY; an M.B.A. from Baruch College and a B.B.A., CCNY. He was a dedicated professor at Montclair State University and adored by his students. He also taught at Baruch College, Hunter College and NYU. He is survived by his daughter Elizabeth Blumberg and his adopted family; his long time companion Olivia Casriel of New York City; her children Lyle Casriel and Seth Casriel and their families.

BROWN—Arline Brown (nee Brooks),
of Riverdale, NY, passed away on Saturday, May 13, 2023 at the age of 89. She is survived by her children, Alan Brown (Linda Foxworthy), Jeffrey (Sasha) Brown, and Susan Brown Mandel (Andrew Mandel); plus grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband, Paul I. Brown. Mrs. Brown had a distinguished career in nonprofit management in New York. Services at Sol Levinson & Bros., Inc. in Baltimore, MD, on Monday, May 15, 2023. See Levinson's website for detailed information. www.sollevinson.com

DOUGLAS—Leonard Stanley,
died peacefully on May 13 at age 98 in Delray Beach, FL, surrounded by loving family. Raised in the Catskills town of Fleischmanns, NY, he was a graduate of City College and Brooklyn Law School, as well as a CPA. During World War II, he served as a mortar gunner in Europe with the U.S. Army 87th Division and fought in the Battle of the Bulge. In his professional life, he was the managing partner at the Manhattan office of Laventhal & Horwath, an international accounting firm. In his retirement, he excelled in his roles as a consultant and an arbitrator. Throughout his life, he was a paragon of discipline, intelligence and family devotion. Known for his acumen and incredible memory, in 98 years no detail ever escaped him. A fine golfer, he enjoyed acrostics and traveling with his family. He is survived by his wife of 73 years, Elaine Kraus Douglas; by his sons Dr. Barry (Kim) and Prof. Lawrence (Nancy Pick) Douglas; and by his five grandchildren: Lauren, Robert (Aimee), Marc (Katie), Jacob and Milo.

GOLDSTEIN—Lyn.

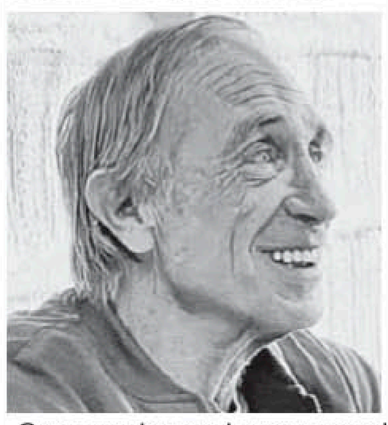


Lyn Goldstein died on May 11, 2023 at her home in Mattituck, NY. Born on October 1, 1945, she was the daughter of Rae (Binen) and Harold Goldstein and grew up in New York City. Lyn graduated from the New York College of Music (now part of NYU Steinhardt School) and composed several Off-Broadway shows. A lifelong entrepreneur in widely varying fields, Lyn owned and operated several highly successful restaurants including Ambrosia on East 60th St., and Lyn's Cafe in Midtown, about which columnist Liz Smith enthused "...the food is terrif, and Lyn is on hand doing her super hostess bit." She also branched out into corporate catering and executive search work in the hospitality industry and, once again, she met with great success. Lyn was a trailblazer in gay rights in New York City and was very active in the seminal stages of the city's Human Rights Campaign Fund. Lyn was an accomplished artist in oil and watercolor. As a designer, her exquisite jewelry was fashioned from sea glass, rare gems and silver and is worn by many. In addition, Lyn was a passionate animal lover throughout her life. She is survived by her wife, Christine Rendel of New York City and Mattituck, NY, her brothers Melvin Goldstein (Cynthia) of Cleveland, OH, Jay Goldstein (Sharon) of Monroe Township, NJ, and countless dear friends. Nephews and nieces include Andre Goldstein, Craig Goldstein, Dechen Surkhang, and Stacy Goldstein. Funeral services will be held Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at 11am at Frank E. Campbell.

GROSS—Robert,
peacefully passed on Sunday, May 14, 2023, one day after his 103rd birthday. He is survived by his sons Gary (Marlene) and Kenneth (Karin). He was predeceased by his beloved wife Gloria Gross and longtime partner Evelyn Kittay. He was devoted to his sons, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and Evelyn's daughters (Carla and Jeanie) and grandchildren. He was a lifelong lover of music, tennis and the arts.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF DEATHS MAY BE TELEPHONED FROM WITHIN NYC TO 212-556-3900; OR OUTSIDE NYC TOLL FREE 1-800-458-5522; OR SENT BY EMAIL TO NYTIMES@CLASSIFIEDSPLUS.COM FOR THE FOLLOWING EDITIONS: Until 4:00 PM the day before for Tuesday through Saturday editions, until 4:00 PM on Friday for Sunday's national edition, until 12:45 PM Saturday for Sunday's New York and late national editions, until 2:00 PM Sunday for Monday's editions. Photos must be submitted by noon the day prior to publication Tuesday through Friday. Photos for Saturday, Sunday and Monday must be submitted by 12 noon on Friday.

LAGO—Gregory James.



Gregory James Lago passed away early on Friday, May 5, 2023 after celebrating his 74th birthday with friends and family the evening before. He was a husband, father, grandfather, brother, man of action: overt/covert, wood engraver, sculptor, painter, outdoorsman, athlete, Senior Warden, back porch Sage, Buffalo Bills fan, and Merry Prankster. Greg is survived by his wife Karen; daughters Ulea and Ruth; grandson James; brothers Daniel and Brian; sister-in-law Cindee; niece Emily; nephews Ben and Tyler; and dog Jacques. Lago was born in North Tonawanda, NY, along the Erie Canal, to Sue and Roswell Lago. Captain of the football and track teams at Royalton Hartland High School, and active in high school theater productions, Greg was jovial and outgoing from the start. He joined the Army in 1968 to see the world and seek adventure; he was sent to Vietnam. Greg, an expert marksman whose pace count and land navigation skills were dead on, served as a Forward Observer assigned to the Blue Spaders of the Big Red One, calling in target locations for artillery strikes from the field. He rose to sergeant during his service and was awarded a Bronze Star with Valor and two Purple Hearts. Greg was an artist from birth, drawing on paper towels with his older brother Danny as a child. While primarily a wood engraver he was an accomplished sculptor, painter, and graphic illustrator. His work has illustrated numerous books and was exhibited in major galleries in the United States and Great Britain. Creativity, tinged with a wry wit and grounded in a deep knowledge of art, music, and history, infused everything Greg did, from patching his Carhartt jacket, leaving abstract images on any surface that made itself available, to running a small business. Greg's work can be seen across New York's North Country in homes, galleries, and museums, from shop signs and public art to furniture and framed pieces on the wall. He worked at Fort Drum, NY, as a civilian Illustrator for over a decade before leaving in 1997 to take over the small business he built with his wife, Winged Bull Studio in Clayton, NY. Called the "unofficial Mayor of Clayton" by Chris L. Brock, writer for the Watertown Daily Times, Greg was a not to be missed element of the small town, often using the gallery space that housed his Vandercook Press to create new works while visitors flowed in and out. Greg will be remembered as a generous, patient, and supportive mentor to many local artists. He served on the board of the Thousand Islands Arts Center, where he also taught classes and showed his work. In 2021, the Arts Center offered a tremendously successful months long one-man exhibition of his work. He was a founding member of Fibonacci Art Gallery, an artist's collective located in Watertown, NY. He was a member of the Society of American Graphic Artists and The New York Center for the Book Arts. Greg's funeral will take place in Clayton, NY, on Tuesday, May 16, 2023 at 11am at Christ Episcopal Church. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to Christ Episcopal Church or the Thousand Islands Arts Center.

MINTZER—Arlene.



Arlene Mintzer a noted Fiber Artist, Hand-Knit and Crochet Designer and Teacher, died on May 12, 2023 at the age of 75, after a long illness. Starting her career as a pattern checker at Women's Wear Daily, Arlene went on to design garments which were published in such magazines as Women's Wear Daily, Surface Design Journal and Threads, of which her design was featured on the cover of the April/May 1990 issue. Arlene's designs have been exhibited at such venues as the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, the Museum of Arts and Design, the Cooper Hewitt and the Brooklyn Museum. Arlene was a contributor to the Institute for Figuring's Hyperbolic Crochet Coral Reef Project, which was exhibited in major museums internationally and drew attention to the destruction of the coral reefs. Arlene was involved in art and needlework therapy for substance abusers and alcoholics. For over 33 years, she developed and taught a variety of workshops for knitters, crocheters and hand-spinners. For 31 years, before her retirement in 2014, Arlene was instrumental in developing, and taught in, both the undergraduate and continuing education divisions at Parsons the New School for Design. Arlene is survived by her husband, Robert Whalen, her brother Charles Mintzer, DVM, his spouse, Leslie and their children, Charlotte and Sam. In lieu of flowers, donations in Arlene's memory may be made to the Jane Goodall Institute.

ROSEN—David A.
Died peacefully on Erev Shabbat, May 12, 2023, at age 86, surrounded by his loving and grieving family. Adoring and adored husband of Andrea for almost 62 years; loving and beloved father of Alexis and Seiko, Amanda and Steven, and Avery and Heather; doting grandfather of Kevin, Daniel, Jamie, and Damian; fond brother of Mark and Susan; treasured brother-in-law of Monty and Phyllis, Jordan, and Sharon and Joseph; cherished uncle and great-uncle; and devoted friend to many. Predeceased by his dear parents Clement and Nathalie Rosen and sister-in-law Yael Penkower. A man of deep integrity, proud graduate of Music and Art High School, Columbia College, and Yale Law School, brilliant lawyer and writer, wise adviser and counsellor, gifted musician, and scintillating raconteur, David will be missed by all who knew him and whose lives he touched. A light has gone out and our world is darker. We are truly bereft. Shiva at the Rosen residence through Friday afternoon, 110 Riverside Dr., Apt. 8F, NYC.

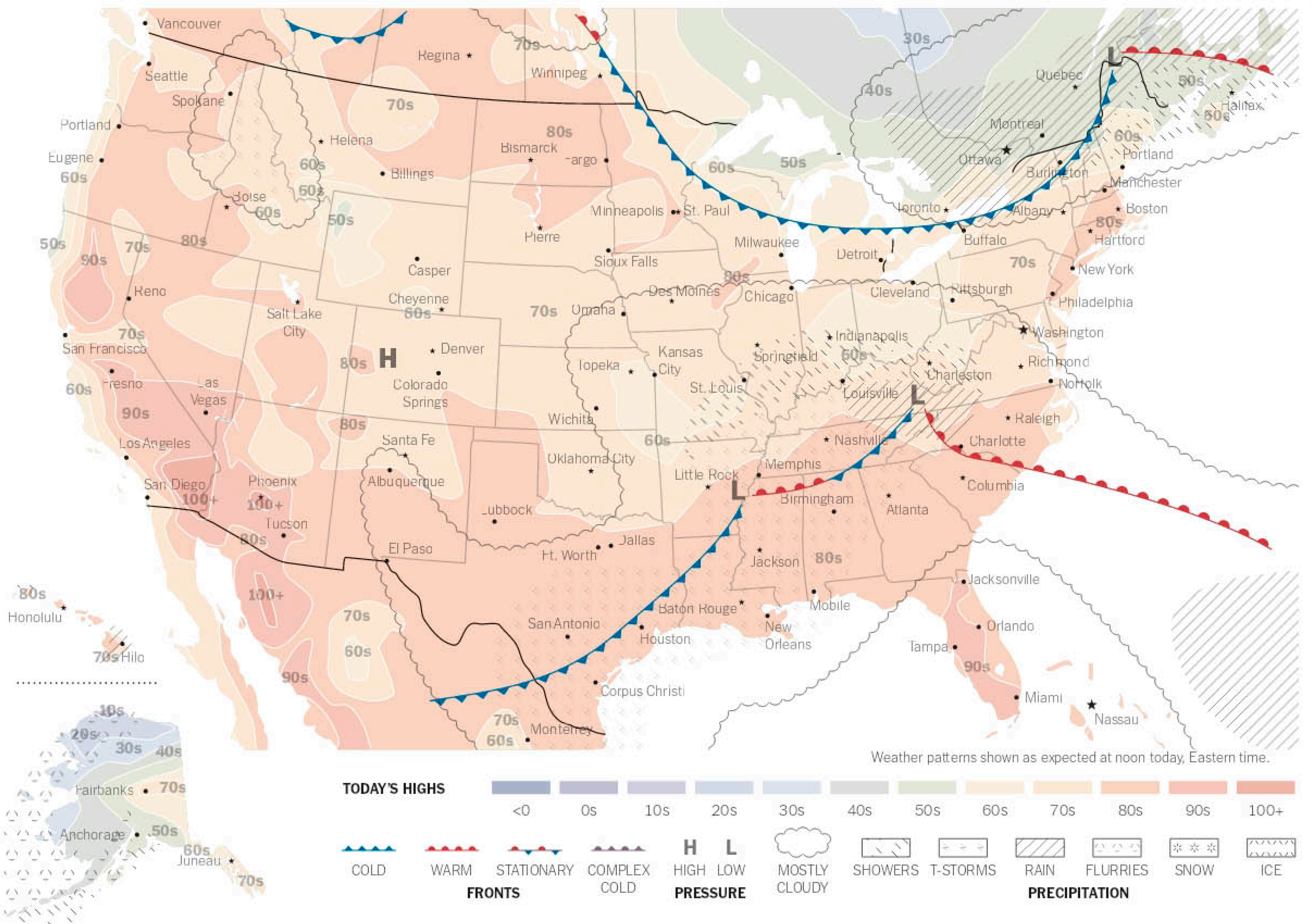
SCHWAT—Lynn Sally.
Beloved wife, sister, mother, grandmother, great - grandmother and devoted friend to all who knew her, passed peacefully Wednesday, May 10. Lynn was born in New York in 1932, the eldest child of Helen and George Freeman and sister to Sheldon and Richard. She spent her youth in Brooklyn and Great Neck, and completed her formal education at Centenary Junior College and New York University. Lynn was an interior designer, a tennis player and an art and theater enthusiast. She was a long tenured member of Temple Beth-El in Great Neck and the Lotus Club in New York. Lynn is survived by her daughter Gail (Samuel Liss), her son Steven (Lisa Yampolsky), her adoring and adored grandchildren Emmy (Michael Lazar), Jessica (Moses Farzan Nekou), Herb (Marissa Lewis), Alix, Eli and Ruby, her great - grandchildren Milo and Wes Lazar, her sisters-in-law Linda Freeman and Lois Freeman and their children and Schwat families. Lynn will be remembered for her warmth and kind and giving spirit.

WINANS—Pauline L. Harrison Finn,
Of Bedford, NY. Died May 7, 2023. Wife of Walter E. Winans, 55 years, and Robert M. Finn, 12 years. Mother of Penny Winans of NY, NY, Sandy Winans (Sandra) of Sanibel FL, Jane McKim (Tom) of Winston-Salem, NC, Eliza Rossman (Jim) of Brooklyn, NY, eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Memorial service at St. Matthew's Church, Bedford, NY on Friday, May 19, at 10am. Contributions can be made to St. Matthew's Church or The Bedford Garden Club.

T | Store Show you care. Shop The Times. nytimes.com/store

Weather Report

Meteorology by **AccuWeather**



Metropolitan Forecast

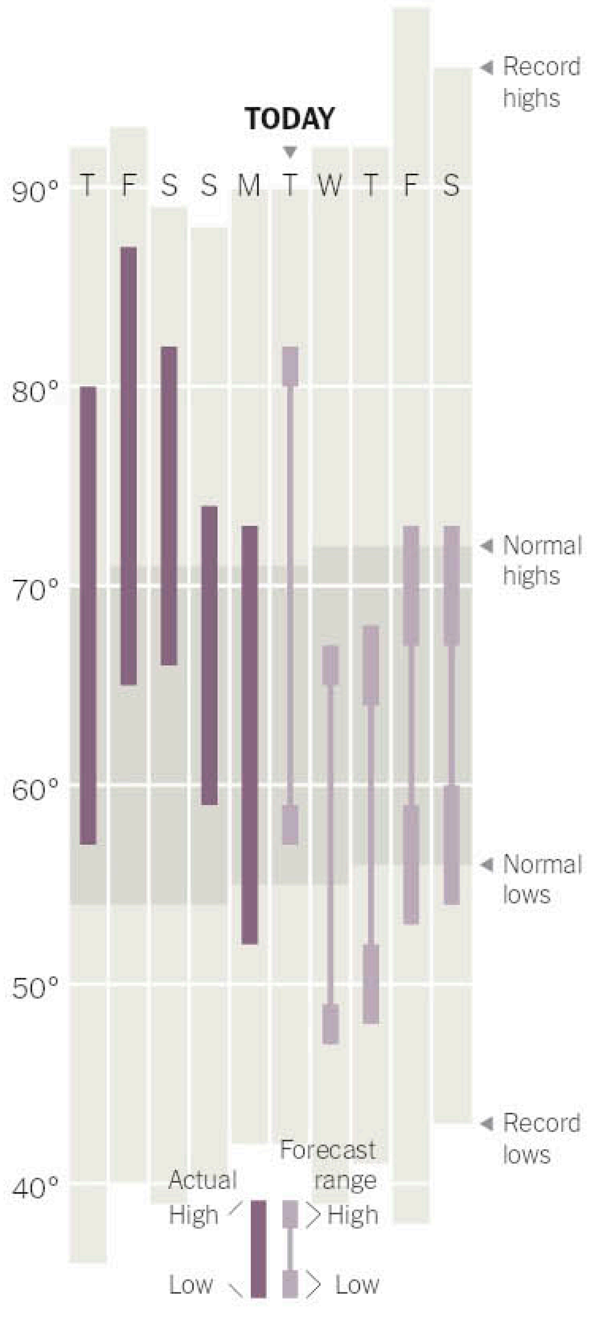
TODAY ....Partly sunny, breezy
High 81. Sunshine will mix with clouds during the afternoon as a low-pressure system moves away. Dry conditions and warm conditions are expected, with temperatures above average.

TONIGHT ....Clouds clearing late
Low 58. It will be mostly cloudy throughout the night. With a moderate breeze in the evening, temperatures will be near the mid-May average.

TOMORROW ....Sunshine, breezy, cooler
High 66. As high pressure builds, dry weather and sunshine will persist. Cooler air from the north will lead to temperatures below average.

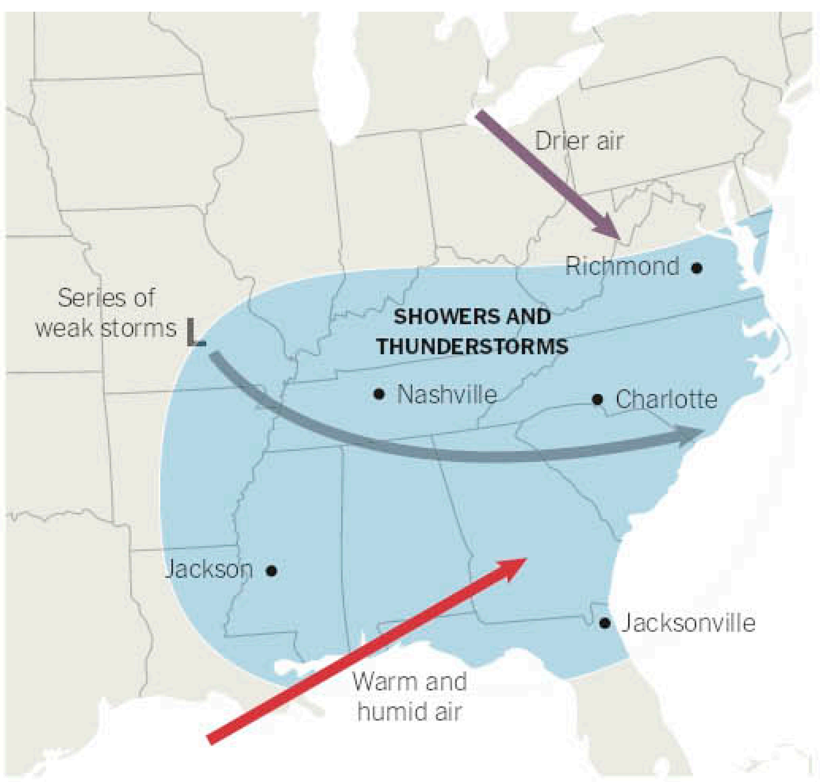
THURSDAY ....Sunny to partly cloudy
Strong high pressure over the region will promote another dry and sunny day. Temperatures will be a few degrees below average. High 66.

FRIDAY
SATURDAY ....Mostly sunny, milder
Friday will be a sunny and dry day with temperatures returning to average. High 70. Saturday will be cloudy with possible thunderstorms. High 70.



Highlight: Southeast Remains Unsettled

A series of weak storms will track from the Mississippi Valley to the Southeast Coast through midweek. This will lead to daily rounds of showers and thunderstorms as warm and humid air from the south clashes with cooler and drier air to the north. Conditions will improve from north to south during the second half of the week as drier air presses in from the north.



National Forecast

Abundant moisture will stream into parts of the Southwest today with showers and thunderstorms during the afternoon and evening. Any of these storms could produce heavy rain.

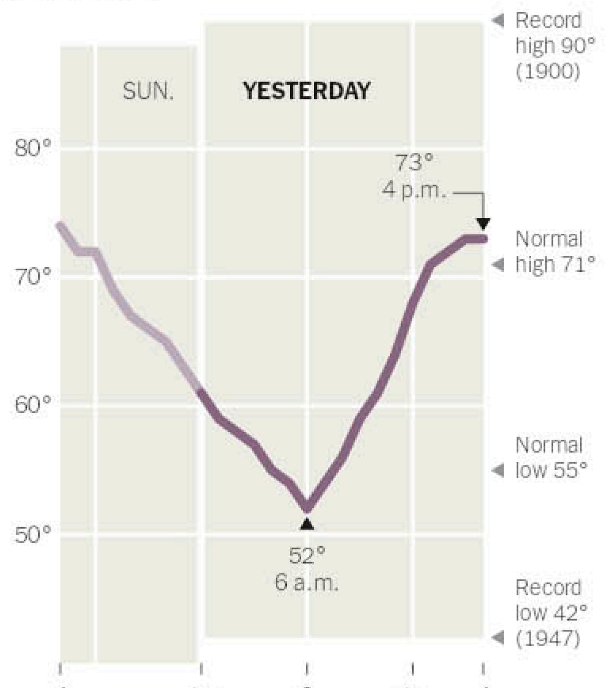
A storm will also travel from Kentucky to North Carolina. Containing plenty of moisture from the Gulf of Mexico, it will produce showers and thunderstorms from the Gulf Coast to the Middle Atlantic. The thunderstorms could produce downpours, and severe weather is most likely across Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and North Carolina, where damaging winds, hail and a few tornadoes are possible.

Aside from some spotty showers in the North, most of the Northeast, as well as the Great Lakes, will be dry. Heat will persist across the Northwest.

Metropolitan Almanac

In Central Park, for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday.

Temperature



Avg. daily departure from normal this month .... +1.0°

Avg. daily departure from normal this year .... +4.7°

Reservoir levels (New York City water supply)

Yesterday 99%
Est. normal 100%

Precipitation (in inches)

Yesterday 0.00
Record 1.16

For the last 30 days
Actual 7.71
Normal 3.90

For the last 365 days
Actual 46.68
Normal 49.52

LAST 30 DAYS

Air pressure
High .... 30.32 8 a.m.
Low .... 30.09 4 p.m.

Humidity
High .... 54% 6 a.m.
Low .... 19% 2 p.m.

Cooling Degree Days

An index of fuel consumption that tracks how far the day's mean temperature rose above 65

Yesterday.. 0
So far this month.. 30
So far this season (since January 1) 71
Normal to date for the season 33

Trends

	Temperature: Average Below / Above	Precipitation: Average Below / Above
Last 10 days	Above	Below
30 days	Average	Above
90 days	Above	Average
365 days	Above	Average

Chart shows how recent temperature and precipitation trends compare with those of the last 30 years.

Cities

High/low temperatures for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday, Eastern time, and precipitation (in inches) for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday. Expected conditions for today and tomorrow.

C .... Clouds
F .... Fog
H .... Haze
I .... Ice
PC .... Partly cloudy
R .... Rain
Sh .... Showers
S .... Sun
Sn .... Snow
SS .... Snow showers
T .... Thunderstorms
Tr .... Trace
W .... Windy
– .... Not available

N.Y.C. region	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
New York City	73/ 52 0	81/ 58 S	66/ 48 S
Bridgeport	74/ 48 0	78/ 56 S	66/ 43 S
Caldwell	77/ 47 0	84/ 58 S	65/ 42 S
Danbury	77/ 41 0	82/ 53 S	64/ 36 S
Islip	73/ 47 0	78/ 59 S	66/ 44 S
Newark	81/ 55 0	86/ 60 S	71/ 46 S
Trenton	75/ 49 0	80/ 56 S	66/ 41 S
White Plains	76/ 46 0	81/ 52 S	65/ 40 S

United States	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Albany	74/ 52 0	78/ 44 PC	60/ 36 S
Albuquerque	75/ 56 0.05	82/ 58 C	80/ 58 T
Anchorage	54/ 43 0	49/ 39 R	52/ 37 S
Atlanta	85/ 69 0.32	85/ 68 T	80/ 64 T
Atlantic City	69/ 58 0	73/ 60 W	68/ 51 S
Austin	82/ 64 0.04	81/ 63 T	87/ 61 PC
Baltimore	78/ 56 0	79/ 58 Sh	72/ 47 S
Baton Rouge	91/ 69 0.12	89/ 71 T	84/ 67 T
Birmingham	91/ 69 0.07	87/ 67 T	77/ 63 T
Boise	81/ 53 0.05	82/ 55 S	82/ 55 PC
Boston	78/ 60 0	82/ 51 S	62/ 44 W
Buffalo	67/ 50 0	67/ 42 PC	53/ 39 S
Burlington	75/ 55 0	65/ 40 T	53/ 36 PC
Casper	69/ 42 0	74/ 41 T	70/ 43 T
Charlotte	82/ 65 0.23	84/ 68 T	83/ 59 PC
Chattanooga	85/ 68 0.32	87/ 64 T	79/ 61 PC
Chicago	68/ 53 0	79/ 49 PC	64/ 47 S
Cincinnati	72/ 58 0.06	65/ 52 R	71/ 46 S
Cleveland	70/ 50 0	72/ 47 C	60/ 41 S
Colorado Springs	63/ 43 0.05	73/ 49 T	70/ 52 T
Columbus	76/ 53 Tr	64/ 49 Sh	69/ 43 S
Concord, N.H.	74/ 51 0	77/ 39 PC	57/ 32 W
Dallas-Ft. Worth	87/ 65 0.04	84/ 61 T	86/ 63 PC
Denver	61/ 46 0.01	76/ 50 T	76/ 49 T
Des Moines	62/ 54 0.09	78/ 56 PC	77/ 58 T
Detroit	74/ 49 0	79/ 43 PC	63/ 42 S
El Paso	84/ 64 0.10	87/ 65 PC	90/ 67 T
Fargo	82/ 53 0	84/ 56 S	84/ 53 C
Hartford	78/ 53 0	83/ 52 S	64/ 40 S
Honolulu	83/ 69 0	83/ 69 PC	84/ 74 R
Houston	85/ 68 0.05	82/ 67 T	84/ 64 T
Indianapolis	70/ 57 0.01	66/ 53 Sh	72/ 48 S
Jackson	91/ 69 0.04	88/ 67 T	80/ 63 T
Jacksonville	86/ 67 Tr	89/ 69 T	88/ 67 T
Kansas City	61/ 55 0.47	69/ 54 C	81/ 56 S
Key West	86/ 76 0.06	85/ 76 S	84/ 76 S
Las Vegas	97/ 75 0	95/ 75 PC	96/ 75 PC
Lexington	74/ 60 0	75/ 52 R	76/ 49 S
Little Rock	91/ 71 0.24	83/ 68 T	81/ 61 C
Los Angeles	76/ 56 0	78/ 57 PC	77/ 58 PC
Louisville	76/ 64 0.07	72/ 55 T	76/ 52 S
Memphis	92/ 71 0.20	84/ 64 T	80/ 62 PC
Miami	88/ 74 0.17	90/ 74 T	93/ 75 T
Milwaukee	67/ 52 0	74/ 44 PC	57/ 44 S
Mpls.-St. Paul	76/ 55 0	82/ 54 PC	76/ 59 PC
Nashville	86/ 67 0.10	85/ 59 T	82/ 57 S
New Orleans	90/ 72 0.04	87/ 72 T	82/ 69 T
Norfolk	71/ 60 0	79/ 64 T	72/ 59 PC
Oklahoma City	69/ 59 0.38	71/ 55 T	78/ 61 PC
Omaha	61/ 52 0.13	77/ 53 PC	82/ 57 S
Orlando	91/ 69 0	92/ 71 T	94/ 71 PC
Philadelphia	77/ 58 0	80/ 60 PC	69/ 49 S
Phoenix	101/ 77 0	100/ 77 S	100/ 76 S
Pittsburgh	77/ 48 0	70/ 48 C	65/ 39 S
Portland, Me.	73/ 55 0	73/ 43 C	58/ 39 W
Portland, Ore.	91/ 60 0.05	88/ 60 PC	91/ 61 S
Providence	76/ 54 0	79/ 54 S	64/ 40 S
Raleigh	77/ 63 0.06	87/ 68 T	81/ 56 PC
Reno	82/ 50 0	85/ 52 S	85/ 53 S
Richmond	72/ 59 0	78/ 59 T	75/ 50 PC
Rochester	73/ 48 0	75/ 39 T	53/ 37 S
Sacramento	86/ 55 0	93/ 56 S	91/ 56 S
Salt Lake City	80/ 60 0	83/ 59 S	83/ 60 PC
San Antonio	81/ 66 0.24	82/ 64 T	90/ 65 PC
San Diego	68/ 61 0	69/ 59 PC	68/ 61 PC
San Francisco	68/ 54 0	72/ 53 PC	67/ 55 PC
San Jose	80/ 56 0	84/ 57 S	82/ 55 S
San Juan	90/ 75 0.02	90/ 76 Sh	91/ 75 T
Seattle	87/ 58 0.05	82/ 58 PC	82/ 59 PC
Sioux Falls	73/ 49 0	80/ 54 PC	82/ 58 PC
Spokane	82/ 57 0	78/ 58 T	78/ 59 T
St. Louis	74/ 59 0.11	73/ 58 Sh	82/ 59 S
St. Thomas	85/ 78 0	86/ 78 PC	87/ 78 PC
Syracuse	71/ 48 0	75/ 39 W	52/ 38 S
Tampa	93/ 73 0	90/ 75 PC	88/ 75 PC
Toledo	74/ 48 0	78/ 46 PC	65/ 42 S
Tucson	94/ 67 0	91/ 67 C	95/ 70 C
Tulsa	74/ 60 0.36	71/ 57 PC	80/ 59 PC
Virginia Beach	70/ 62 0	79/ 65 T	71/ 58 PC
Washington	78/ 60 0	77/ 58 Sh	71/ 49 S
Wichita	62/ 56 0.62	73/ 54 C	79/ 57 S
Wilmington, Del.	77/ 55 0	80/ 58 PC	71/ 45 S

Africa	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Algiers	72/ 51 0.10	75/ 50 S	74/ 59 W
Cairo	91/ 64 0	97/ 71 C	97/ 65 S
Cape Town	72/ 49 0	67/ 52 S	68/ 55 C
Dakar	81/ 73 0	81/ 73 PC	81/ 73 S
Johannesburg	59/ 46 0.46	59/ 47 T	67/ 50 PC
Nairobi	81/ 59 0.05	76/ 60 R	77/ 61 T
Tunis	65/ 55 0.27	75/ 61 W	77/ 62 C

Asia/Pacific	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Baghdad	100/ 69 0	95/ 63 S	99/ 73 PC
Bangkok	99/ 82 0.02	99/ 82 S	101/ 83 PC
Beijing	97/ 57 0	96/ 65 T	80/ 57 C
Damascus	88/ 54 0	93/ 63 S	97/ 62 W
Hong Kong	84/ 73 0	86/ 78 PC	90/ 82 C
Jakarta	91/ 76 0	89/ 77 T	90/ 77 T
Jerusalem	83/ 58 0	92/ 67 S	89/ 61 S
Karachi	93/ 82 0	94/ 83 W	96/ 81 W
Manila	93/ 79 0	92/ 81 T	92/ 82 R
Mumbai	91/ 81 0	94/ 84 S	93/ 83 S
New Delhi	108/ 78 0	108/ 83 C	106/ 83 S
Riyadh	92/ 77 0	101/ 82 W	108/ 81 W
Seoul	82/ 52 0	86/ 59 PC	82/ 60 PC
Shanghai	88/ 69 0	90/ 69 PC	72/ 65 R
Singapore	90/ 81 0.05	90/ 80 T	90/ 79 T
Sydney	68/ 52 0.03	71/ 56 S	63/ 50 Sh
Taipei City	84/ 69 0.01	87/ 72 PC	90/ 76 PC
Tehran	82/ 57 0	75/ 55 S	78/ 64 S
Tokyo	66/ 60 0.31	76/ 61 S	82/ 67 S

Europe	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Amsterdam	58/ 46 0.51	57/ 44 PC	58/ 41 PC
Athens	79/ 59 0	74/ 59 PC	74/ 61 T
Berlin	68/ 47 0.09	62/ 43 C	61/ 40 C
Brussels	59/ 45 0.22	59/ 41 PC	62/ 41 PC
Budapest	69/ 53 0.71	65/ 56 R	69/ 53 T
Copenhagen	68/ 48 0.24	58/ 42 Sh	57/ 41 S
Dublin	57/ 38 0	62/ 43 PC	64/ 47 PC
Edinburgh	58/ 39 0.16	61/ 43 PC	61/ 49 C
Frankfurt	68/ 49 0.14	63/ 43 C	63/ 43 S
Geneva	63/ 47 0.20	59/ 50 R	61/ 47 C
Helsinki	72/ 43 0	62/ 50 R	57/ 42 W
Istanbul	78/ 54 0.02	78/ 59 PC	69/ 56 T
Kyiv	76/ 49 0	67/ 57 C	75/ 57 PC
Lisbon	72/ 56 0	83/ 63 S	83/ 59 PC
London	63/ 50 0.16	63/ 46 PC	65/ 48 PC
Madrid	72/ 46 0	75/ 44 PC	75/ 44 S
Moscow	68/ 46 0	68/ 49 S	74/ 57 PC
Nice	70/ 56 0.07	71/ 60 C	69/ 60 PC
Oslo	68/ 47 0.24	66/ 39 R	62/ 37 C
Paris	64/ 48 0.06	61/ 44 PC	63/ 45 PC
Prague	63/ 48 0.41	60/ 43 C	54/ 43 R
Rome	73/ 52 0.13	68/ 58 T	69/ 53 R
St. Petersburg	75/ 48 0.00	73/ 54 C	70/ 48 C
Stockholm	67/ 44 0	57/ 41 R	51/ 37 R
Vienna	64/ 51 0.12	61/ 49 R	53/ 46 R
Warsaw	61/ 51 0.50	70/ 53 C	56/ 45 R

North America	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Acapulco	90/ 76 0	90/ 76 S	91/ 76 S
Bermuda	72/ 67 0.06	72/ 67 C	77/ 70 S
Edmonton	83/ 49 0	75/ 39 W	70/ 38 S
Guadalajara	88/ 55 0	88/ 58 S	89/ 58 S
Havana	86/ 67 0	87/ 68 T	88/ 70 R
Kingston	90/ 80 0	89/ 79 W	89/ 80 Sh
Martinique	90/ 76 0.03	88/ 76 Sh	89/ 76 PC
Mexico City	76/ 52 0	76/ 53 R	77/ 55 R
Monterrey	79/ 65 0.20	82/ 65 T	86/ 67 PC
Montreal	72/ 46 0	58/ 38 R	53/ 38 PC
Nassau	84/ 74 0.07	84/ 74 S	86/ 75 PC
Panama City	90/ 75 0.08	86/ 75 R	91/ 73 T
Quebec City	64/ 42 0.15	53/ 33 R	50/ 30 PC
Santo Domingo	90/ 73 0.04	90/ 73 PC	89/ 74 T
Toronto	74/ 43 0	74/ 39 PC	55/ 38 S
Vancouver	76/ 57 0	71/ 55 PC	71/ 54 S
Winnipeg	86/ 52 0	80/ 54 PC	78/ 42 R

South America	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Buenos Aires	70/ 58 0	73/ 60 S	72/ 60 PC
Caracas	87/ 74 0.21	88/ 74 T	89/ 74 C
Lima	78/ 67 0	75/ 66 PC	75/ 68 PC
Quito	66/ 46 0.09	68/ 46 Sh	70/ 46 Sh
Recife	86/ 78 0.11	86/ 76 R	85/ 76 Sh
Rio de Janeiro	77/ 68 0	77/ 69 S	75/ 69 Sh
Santiago	64/ 48 0	65/ 50 PC	60/ 45 Sh

Recreational Forecast

Sun, Moon and Planets

New	First Quarter	Full	Last Quarter
May 19 11:54 a.m.	May 27	June 3 11:42 p.m.	June 10

Sun	**RISE**	5:38 a.m.	**Moon**	**R**	4:02 a.m.
	SET	8:07 p.m.		**S**	5:04 p.m.
	NEXT R	5:37 a.m.		**R**	4:26 a.m.
Jupiter	**R**	4:33 a.m.	**Mars**	**R**	9:54 a.m.
	S	5:53 p.m.		**S**	12:46 a.m.
Saturn	**R**	2:29 a.m.	**Venus**	**R**	8:21 a.m.
	S	1:21 p.m.		**S**	11:46 p.m.

Boating

From Montauk Point to Sandy Hook, N.J., out to 20 nautical miles, including Long Island Sound and New York Harbor.

Winds will be out of the southwest at 10-15 knots. Wave heights will be 1 foot or less on New York Harbor, 1-2 feet on Long Island Sound, and 2-4 feet on on the open ocean. Visibility will be unrestricted.

High Tides

Atlantic City	5:34 a.m.	6:07 p.m.
Barnegat Inlet	5:43 a.m.	6:15 p.m.
The Battery	6:23 a.m.	6:54 p.m.
Beach Haven	7:07 a.m.	7:40 p.m.
Bridgeport	9:27 a.m.	9:49 p.m.
City Island	9:58 a.m.	10:18 p.m.
Fire Island Lt.	6:35 a.m.	7:08 p.m.
Montauk Point	7:03 a.m.	7:31 p.m.
Northport	9:47 a.m.	10:06 p.m.
Port Washington	10:08 a.m.	10:26 p.m.
Sandy Hook	5:49 a.m.	6:22 p.m.
Shinnecock Inlet	5:34 a.m.	6:04 p.m.
Stamford	9:40 a.m.	9:58 p.m.
Tarrytown	8:12 a.m.	8:43 p.m.
Willets Point	9:55 a.m.	10:12 p.m.

Mountain and Ocean Temperatures



A low-pressure system migrating out of the Midwest will sweep through the Appalachians and into the Middle Atlantic, producing showers and thunderstorms. In New England, a cold front will slide through the region in the afternoon. Conditions will remain dry and seasonable for portions of the Northeast.

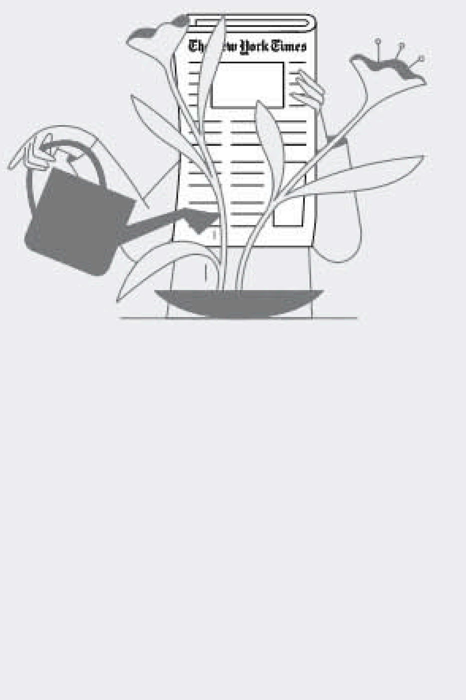
The New York Times

The events shaping our world, delivered daily.

Try more days of Times delivery.

Make the most of these times by getting home delivery more frequently. Explore the latest opinion, food, style and science coverage. Stay on top of the nation's divided politics, prospects for the economy, the impact of climate change — and what they all may mean for you. Your support makes Times journalism possible. Thank you.

Find the right delivery choice for you at nytimes.com/deliveryupgrade





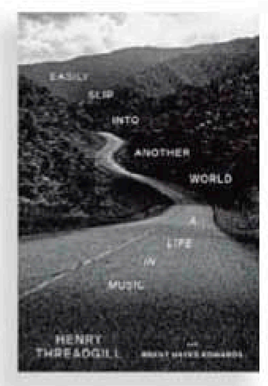


2 FILM
Anticipated features opening at Cannes. BY KYLE BUCHANAN

2 THEATER REVIEW
White gloves and Black debutantes. BY MAYA PHILLIPS







4 BOOK REVIEW
Vietnam recalibrated a jazzman's molten emotional core.
BY DWIGHT GARNER



'Stranger Love,' a singular and hypnotic six-hour opera, opens (and closes) on Saturday in Los Angeles.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL GEORGE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

It Happens Just One Night

By ZACHARY WOOLFE

Years ago, when the composer Dylan Mattingly was at work on a new project, he wrote to his collaborator, Thomas Bartscherer, telling him, "I often find that *really* long is better than just long."

Mattingly followed his own advice — and then some. "Stranger Love," a singular, tender, euphoric, hypnotic opera that he and Bartscherer first envisioned 11 years ago, eventually grew to six hours, well past the point at which people start calling something impossible to produce.

"We went into it thinking it would never happen, because how could it?" Mattingly, 32, said in a recent interview.

Chunks of the piece have been performed in concert. But on Saturday — for the first time, and for one performance only — the whole thing will be staged at Walt Disney Concert Hall, the home of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, which has embraced "Stranger Love" as one of its trademark pie-in-the-

CONTINUED ON PAGE C5



Top, Dylan Mattingly, left, and Thomas Bartscherer collaborated on the long-gestating opera. Above, Gabe Cabezas rehearsing. The voices gradually cease, and the work's scope broadens to the cosmos.

NEW LEADER AT BOSTON SYMPHONY
Chad Smith is leaving his post as head of the Los Angeles Philharmonic to become president and chief executive. Page 5.

To Be Seen As More Than Trans

After her title role in 'Monica,' Trace Lysette is ready to prove herself as a leading lady.

By ERIK PIEPENBURG

Trace Lysette has no children, but she is a mom. Or was: For about a decade she reigned as "mother" of the House of Mizrahi, a legendary house, as the voguers will tell you, in New York's ballroom scene.

The "children" for whom she was a surrogate parent still gush over the night in 2012 when she walked a ball dolled up like Marilyn Monroe, her hair bleached blond and her fake fur cinched with a borrowed Comme des Garçons belt. A YouTube video from that evening shows her in command of a swooning throng.

In the new film "Monica" (in theaters), Lysette is consumed by a less fierce but equally potent expression of motherhood. She plays the title character, a transgender woman who reunites and uneasily reconciles with members of her estranged family as they care for their ailing mother (played by Patricia Clarkson), who doesn't recognize her daughter at first.

"It's not just a trans story; it's a family story," Lysette said in a recent video interview from Los Angeles.

Leisurely directed by Andrea Pallaoro, the film is a big break for Lysette, herself a

CONTINUED ON PAGE C7



RYAN PFLUGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Trace Lysette plays a transgender woman who reunites with her family in the film "Monica."

JAMES PONIEWOZIK
CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

Democracy Goes Up In Smoke

On 'Succession,' a network's call on election night is all about the money for the Roys.

This article includes spoilers for the most recent episode of "Succession."

IN SUNDAY'S EPISODE of "Succession," a TV network sold out democracy. The most implausible part of the story was how high a price the sellers got for it.

In the episode "America Decides," the heirs to the conservative media empire Waystar Royco helped Jeryd Mencken, a Nazi-curious presidential candidate, claim a violence-tainted election by ordering their cable-news network to call it for him. The multibillion-dollar reward: Mencken would kill Waystar's pending sale to a Swedish tech bro, handing Kendall and Roman Roy the kingdom after their father's death.

In reality, cable news favors for antidemocratic political forces come much cheaper. But let's deal with the fake news network first.

In the "Succession" episode — which probably should have carried a content warning for anyone who has followed the last couple of presidential elections — the night begins with the Democrat, Daniel Jimenez, ahead in the polls. The results end up tight enough to be decided by a highly convenient, apparently intentional fire in a Milwaukee vote counting station, which incinerates enough pro-Democratic ballots to swing Wisconsin

CONTINUED ON PAGE C6



FOCUS FEATURES

The Annual Holy Pilgrimage to Cannes

Some star-driven films will take a bow on the French Riviera.

By KYLE BUCHANAN

Wes Anderson's films have premiered at a wide variety of festivals, but after "Moonrise Kingdom" (2012), "The French Dispatch" (2021) and his coming ensemble comedy, "Asteroid City," Cannes is the fest he keeps coming back to. Last week, I asked Anderson what he found so compelling about a debut on the Croisette.

"The reason to go to Cannes, I think, is because they said yes," he deadpanned. "After that, there isn't really much to contemplate."

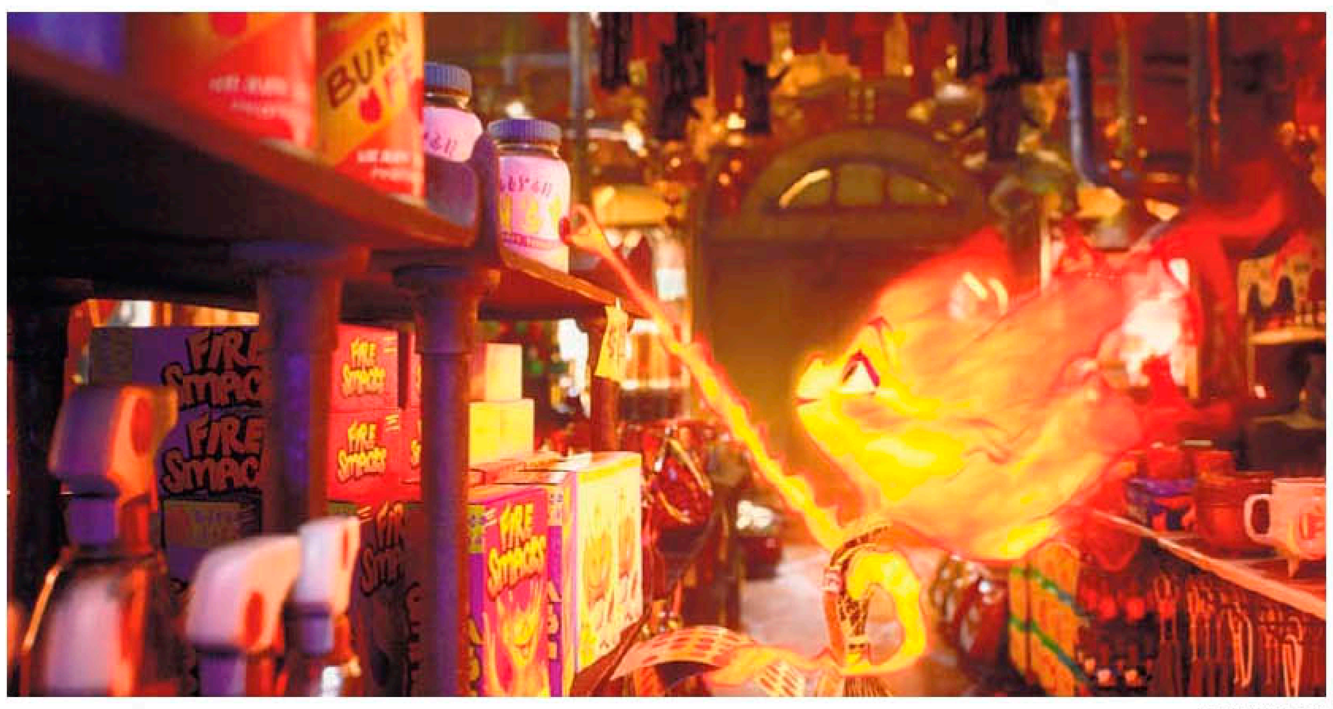
Well, there's a little more to it than that, Anderson admitted: For cinema lovers, there is no holier pilgrimage to make than to the Cannes Film Festival, where movies are treated with the utmost reverence and routinely given marathon standing ovations.

It is where great auteurs have been canonized, like Martin Scorsese, who won the Palme d'Or in 1976 for "Taxi Driver" and will return this year with his new feature "Killers of the Flower Moon," and Quentin Tarantino, a Palme winner (for "Pulp Fiction" in 1994) and Cannes habitué who will be back at the fest this year for a wide-ranging conversation that may touch on what could be his coming final film.

"I look at Cannes in relation to the other movies I know showed there, and I feel lucky enough to be included in the program that debuted those films," Anderson said. "For me, it's a chance to be involved in this movie history, which I love."

A Cannes launch can be expensive for a studio to bankroll, since the airfare, star entourages and five-star hotels alone all add up. Still, the return on investment can be major. Last year, "Top Gun: Maverick" opened with a fawning Tom Cruise summit and sent fighter jets flying over the South of France, while Baz Luhrmann's "Elvis" threw a rock concert on the beach where drones traced Elvis Presley's silhouette in the sky. Both films leveraged their splashy debuts to become two of the biggest global hits of the year, and were nominated for the best picture Oscar, to boot.

This year, several star-driven films will attempt to capitalize on a Cannes bow, including "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny," which is being billed as Harrison Ford's final appearance in his most iconic role. Can it overcome the tepid response to the last sequel, "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull," and the substitution of James Mangold ("Ford v Ferrari") for Steven Spielberg as director of the series? At least the addition of Phoebe Waller-Bridge, in her most high-profile role since "Fleabag," will add a welcome jolt to the franchise.



DISNEY/PIXAR

The director Todd Haynes, who premiered "Carol" at Cannes, returns to the festival with another female-driven two-hander: "May December," which stars Julianne Moore as a teacher whose scandalous relationship with a former student is scrutinized by a movie star (Natalie Portman) preparing to play the teacher in a film. Other star-heavy films include "The New Boy," featuring Cate Blanchett as a nun in her first role since "Tár," and "Firebrand," with Jude Law as Henry VIII and Alicia Vikander as his last wife, Katherine Parr.

Recently, the Palme d'Or has often gone to a film with breakout potential.

And then there are "Asteroid City" and "Killers of the Flower Moon," the fest's two most anticipated premieres. The former takes place at a 1950s retreat for space-obsessed youngsters and stars Anderson staples like Jason Schwartzman, Scarlett Johansson and Tilda Swinton, as well as the new recruit Tom Hanks, about whom Anderson said, "I couldn't have had a better time working with anybody." Scorsese's Apple-backed film charts the mysterious murders of the Osage tribe in the 1920s and will bring stars like Leonardo DiCaprio and Robert De Niro to the red carpet.

(Still, weep for what might have been: Greta Gerwig's candy-colored July release, "Barbie," will skip an early premiere at Cannes, depriving us of a red-carpet fantasy to trump all others.)

In recent years, the Palme d'Or award has often gone to a film with breakout-hit potential, like "Parasite" and "Triangle of Sadness." The director of "Triangle of Sadness," Ruben Ostlund, will preside over this year's competition jury, a group that includes Brie Larson and Paul Dano, and they'll be picking their favorite from an auteur-heavy lineup that includes several former Palme winners.

Among them are Wim Wenders, who took the Palme for "Paris, Texas" and returns with "Perfect Days," about a Tokyo toilet cleaner, and Hirokazu Kore-eda, whose new film "Monster" is the first film he has shot in Japan since his Palme winner "Shoplifters." No director has ever taken the Palme three times, though Ken Loach could this year, if his new working-class drama "The Old Oak" proves as acclaimed as "The Wind That Shakes the Barley" and "I, Daniel Blake."

This year's Cannes has its fair share of long films — "Occupied City," Steve McQueen's documentary about Nazi-occupied Amsterdam, runs four hours and six minutes — but not every buzzy premiere will be feature-length. The fest will also premiere shorts directed by Pedro Almodóvar ("A Strange Way of Life") and Jean-Luc Godard ("Phony Wars"), while introducing "The Idol," an already-controversial HBO series from the "Euphoria" mastermind Sam Levinson starring Abel Tesfaye, known as the Weeknd.



APPLE TV+



A24

Top from left, Jake Ryan, Jason Schwartzman and Tom Hanks in Wes Anderson's "Asteroid City." Clockwise from above left: Ember, voiced by Leah Lewis, in Pixar's "Elemental"; Lily Gladstone and Leonardo DiCaprio in "Killers of the Flower Moon"; and a scene from Jonathan Glazer's "The Zone of Interest."

And though the festival will offer G-rated pleasures in the form of Pixar's new film "Elemental," it wouldn't be Cannes without a few envelope-pushers. Keep an eye on Catherine Breillat, whose sexually explicit filmography ("Fat Girl," "Romance") gets a new entry with "Last Summer," about a lawyer who falls for her teenage stepson.

Then there's the film I'm most curious about: "The Zone of Interest," an Auschwitz-set drama from the director Jonathan Glazer. Rumor has it that Cannes passed on Glazer's audacious "Under the Skin" back in 2013 and was eager to make up for that mistake. Since Glazer's films ("Birth" and "Sexy Beast") are infrequent but stunning, a new project from the director is reason enough to say yes to Cannes — and after that, there isn't really much to contemplate.

MAYA PHILLIPS | THEATER REVIEW

Dressed Up for a Party, But Reality Intervenes

Colette Robert's play takes aim at antiquated rites of passage that mask deeper concerns.

THE ENTERPRISING PRESIDENT of the Harriet Holland Social Club just wants the cotillion to be successful. The floral centerpieces are in place, a band is onstage and the draperies are neatly tucked in and tied. The debutantes are primped and primed. By night's end, she hopes, these young women will set off into their bright futures.

Presented by New Georges and the Movement Theater Company at A.R.T./New York Theaters, "The Harriet Holland Social Club Presents the 84th Annual Star-Burst Cotillion in the Grand Ballroom of the Renaissance Hotel," written and directed by Colette Robert, mimics the proceedings of debutante balls. There's the introduction of the debutantes, the father-daughter dance and a multicourse dinner, but this cotillion — and the production — is far from flawless.

Madam President (Akyiaa Wilson), a 2-D villain, encourages the debutantes (Claire Fort, Caturah Brown, Starr Kirkland, Aigner Mizzelle, Monique St. Cyr, Portland Thomas) to prioritize appearances and wealth, hurling critiques with no regard for them as individuals. The more enlightened vice president (a hilarious Jehan O. Young, with priceless passive-aggressive expressions and line reads) pushes for more substance, like community outreach, and less of the superficial focus on style and status.

The script clearly has something to say about these antiquated rites of passage. But Robert doesn't go beyond the obvious: Instead of being a source of uplift and empowerment, the script says, Black debutante balls often promote classism, colorism and retrograde gender politics, like the objectification of Black women's bodies. And yet, cotillions aren't the source of the problem; they're a symptom of a more nuanced social and cultural infrastructure. The play's lack of deeper inquiry and character building leaves us feeling unsated — even as the debutantes begin to question the whole affair.

Structurally, the play never finds its footing. It mostly takes place in real time, but sometimes it veers off into a kind of choreopoem, with the girls speaking from the future, posing as if on an auction block or tearing off their dresses. And the uneven direction results in scenes in which the actors' delivery is stilted — full of anticipatory pauses, not the naturalistic flow of conversation.

More graceful is Teresa L. Williams's set design, transforming the theater into a ballroom, and Stacey Derosier's snazzy lighting, which creates a party atmosphere. And the fabulous Harriet Holland Social Club singers (Kayla Coleman, Cherrye J. Davis, Cristina Pitter, Montria Walker) give Marvelettes and Ronettes vibes, with their shimmery dresses (fantastic all-around costume design by Mika Eubanks) and choreography (nicHi douglas). The music (Dionne McClain-Freeney) expounds on the show's themes via clever lyrics and a catchy score, played by the band on piano, upright bass and drums.



LORETO JAMLING

Debutantes whirl and twirl during a ball in Colette Robert's play, at A.R.T./New York Theaters.

The Harriet Holland Social Club Presents the 84th Annual Star-Burst Cotillion in the Grand Ballroom of the Renaissance Hotel
Through May 27 at A.R.T./New York Theaters in Manhattan; newgeorges.org. Running time: 1 hour 40 minutes.

It seems as if "The Cotillion" is trying to replicate what the writer Jocelyn Bioh did so well in "School Girls; or, the African Mean Girls Play," which didn't critique beauty pageants as much as the culture that created them.

Robert's show did inspire me to ask my mother about her cotillion. I was expecting embarrassment. "I enjoyed it," she said. Her experience didn't change her life for better or for worse. "The Cotillion" forgets: This is also just a party.

A Star's Film Clips Help Illustrate His Story

The documentary about Michael J. Fox relies on footage to direct the narrative.

By ROBERT ITO

When Davis Guggenheim approached Michael J. Fox three years ago in the hopes of making a film about his life, the director had a few things going for him, besides his previous success with documentaries about other luminaries including Al Gore (the Oscar-winning "An Inconvenient Truth") and the Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai ("He Named Me Malala"). Guggenheim's wife, the actress Elisabeth Shue, had worked with Fox before, starring as his girlfriend in the second and third installments of the "Back to the Future" series. And Guggenheim had directed "It Might Get Loud," a documentary about Jimmy Page, Jack White and The Edge, a fact that endeared him to Fox, a longtime electric guitar player.

Even so, Fox initially balked at the idea of a movie, particularly one centered on tales he had already written about in four best-selling memoirs. "I told him, my story's pretty self-explanatory," Fox recalled. "I don't know how many times you can tell it."

But Guggenheim persevered. He didn't want to do a film version of Fox's own memoirs, which detail the actor's life and career and struggles with Parkinson's, as good as he thought they were. And he didn't want to make your standard documentary, the sort with talking heads and somber narration. Guggenheim wanted to make a movie with as much life and humor as its subject, a fun, fast-paced effort not unlike, say, a movie starring Michael J. Fox.

"I wanted to take the audience on a wild ride," Guggenheim said.

In the end, Fox relented, albeit with one request: no violins. "No maudlin treatment of a guy with a terrible diagnosis," Guggenheim said.

"Still: A Michael J. Fox Movie" (streaming on Apple TV+) interweaves scripted reenactments, archival behind-the-scenes footage, interviews with Fox and copious clips from Fox's four-decade-long career, including his breakthrough roles in "Back to the Future" and on "Family Ties," which established Fox as one of Hollywood's biggest stars.

The result is a genre-defying hybrid that uses Fox's own film and TV work to creatively illustrate key moments of his life (more on that later), and even reveal long-held secrets — for example, how Fox managed to hide his Parkinson's for years, even while starring on the ABC comedy series "Spin City."

The film explores Fox's career from its earliest beginnings, when the actor was 16, but playing 12, in the Canadian sitcom "Leo and Me." In a video interview from his office in New York, Fox criticized his work in those early gigs. "I eventually figured out how to act," he said, "but early on, I had no clue."

Initially, Guggenheim wanted to tell Fox's story largely through re-enactments, with actors playing Fox at various stages of his life. The film's editor, Michael Harte ("Three Identical Strangers"), was against the idea. "The problem is, you can't show the actor's face," he said. "What's brilliant about Michael is he's so engaging, he's got this superstar quality." Using a double of someone as immediately recognizable as Fox, he thought, "would push the audience out of the movie."

Instead, Harte thought they could use movie and TV clips of the actor to tell Fox's story, which set up a "battle" (Guggenheim's word) of creative wills between the director and the editor.

'I wanted to take the audience on a wild ride.'

DAVIS GUGGENHEIM
DIRECTOR OF 'STILL'

One day, on a whim, Harte combined a scene from "Bright Lights, Big City," in which Fox flips through an article he's been assigned to check facts, with an audio clip of Fox describing the first time he read the script for "Back to the Future." Guggenheim loved the mash-up, and encouraged Harte to find more. It wasn't difficult. As Guggenheim noted, there were a lot of movies and episodes to pull from.

In the end, the two settled on an imaginative compromise, mixing scripted shots of Fox's double, shot from behind so his face couldn't be seen, and shots of the real Fox, either from the actor's films and shows, or in behind-the-scenes clips culled from 92 VHS cassettes of "Family Ties" footage.

To find all those scenes, Harte spent eight weeks watching every film and TV show Fox had ever been in. "The TV shows were the Everest," Harte said. He painstakingly flagged every scene he thought might be useful: Michael drinks coffee. Michael walks down a hallway.

It helped that Harte has been a mad Fox fan from childhood. The first movie he saw in a theater as a young boy growing up in Ireland was "Back to the Future Part II" ("a game changer"); his all-time favorite film, even now, is "Back to the Future."

Guggenheim, on the other hand, wasn't as huge a fan of Fox or his films growing up.

"I don't think Davis had seen the 'Back to the Future' films before this," Harte said, "and his wife is *in them*."

"I was watching different things," Guggenheim said.

The filmmakers also pored through hours of "Spin City" episodes to find footage of how Fox had kept his Parkinson's hidden from the show's cast, crew and audience, a fact Fox wrote about in his first memoir, "Lucky Man." In one montage, we see Fox twiddling pens, holding phones, checking his watch, rolling up his sleeves, anything to mask the shaking in his left hand. "We were taking stuff that was scripted and using it as archive," Guggenheim said.

As Harte was sifting through the thousands of clips for material, Guggenheim set about casting actors for the re-enactments, which included stand-ins for Woody Harrelson, a longtime friend and one-time co-star; Fox's no-nonsense but ultimately supportive dad; and Fox himself. To find someone who could match Fox's lithe physicality, the creators had actors jump up and slide across a car hood — or try to. The one actor who could do it, Danny Irizarry, got the job. "I loved the actors that played me," Fox said.

When the first rough cut was complete, the filmmakers screened it for Fox. "It was utterly terrifying," Harte said. "Here's someone I grew up watching and adoring, and the first time I meet him, we're not having a few drinks in a bar, I'm presenting what I see is 90 minutes of his life. Here's what I think is relevant, and here's what I think *isn't* relevant, so I cut that out."

Fox was pleased with the finished project. "I think they did a beautiful job," he said.

Not that moments from his life story weren't painful to watch, particularly many moments about Tracy Pollan, Fox's wife of 35 years, whom he met on the set of "Family Ties." "I married this girl who had a nascent career, doing well, and then she married me and was like this single mother," he said. "I was off doing movies and she was home with a baby, and I made jokes about it on talk shows." Using colorful language, Fox bemoaned the horrible thing he did to her.

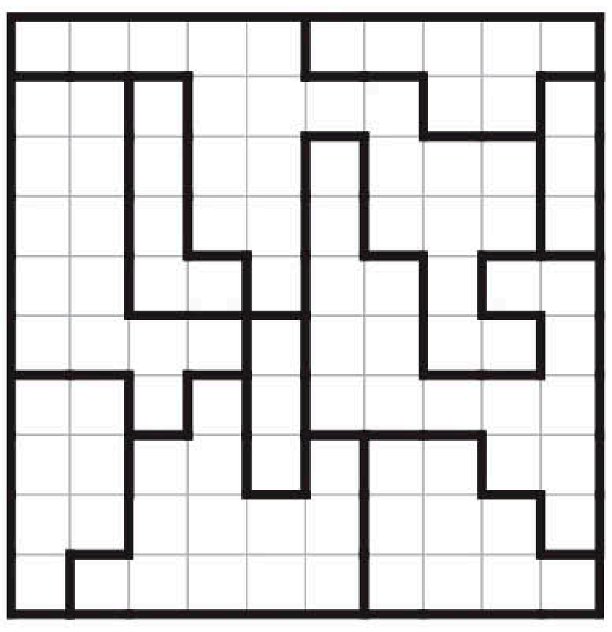
"And she came through for me when she could have slipped out," he continued. "She could have said, 'Parkinson's, that's not for me.' But she didn't, she stuck around. Getting to see that in the film was such a privilege."

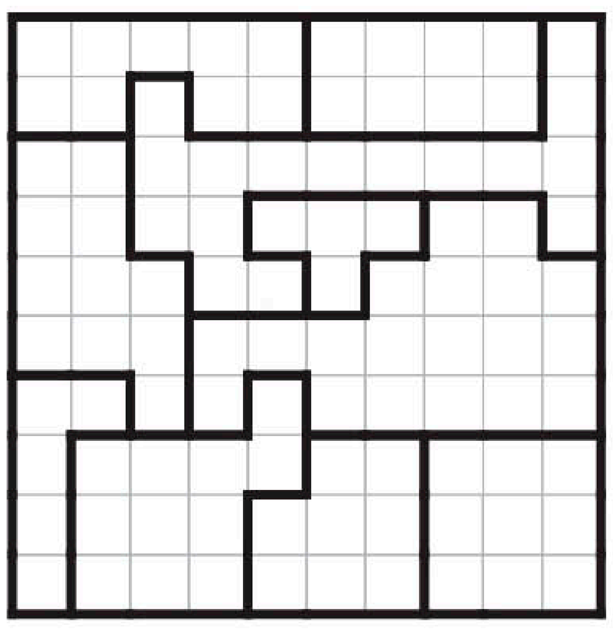


APPLE TV+

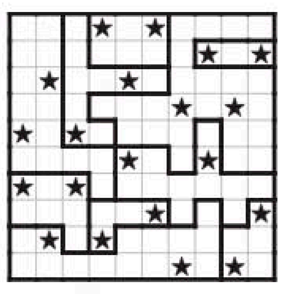
Michael J. Fox in "Still: A Michael J. Fox Movie." The documentary explores his career from its earliest beginnings.

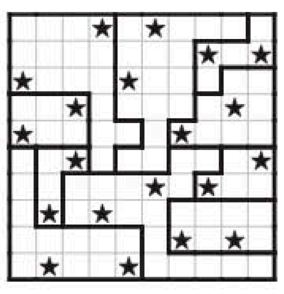
Two Not Touch





ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS PUZZLES





Put two stars in each row, column and region of the grid. No two stars may touch, not even diagonally.

Copyright © 2023 www.krazydad.com

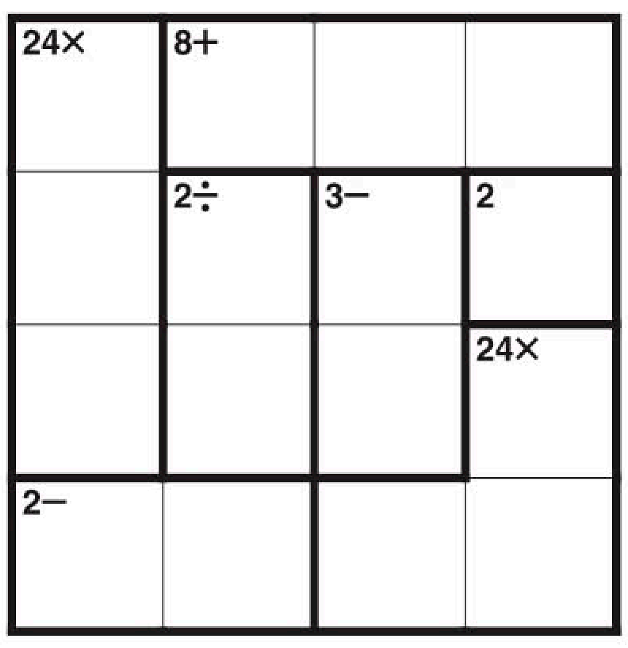
Cryptogram

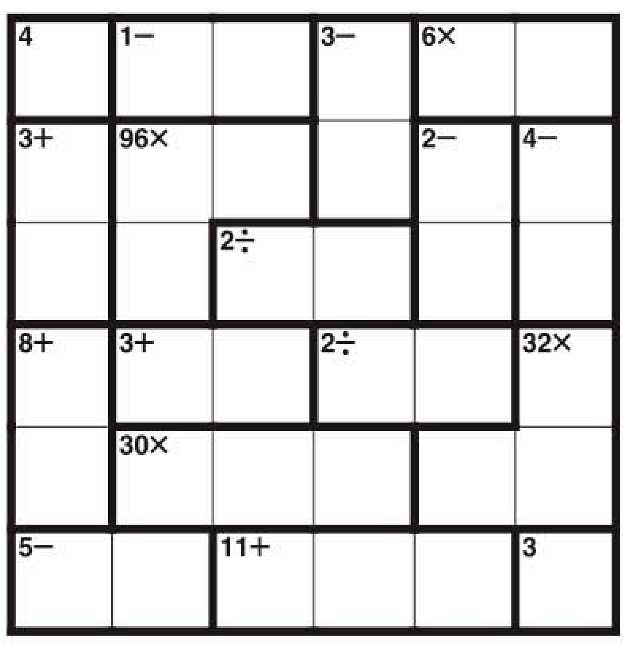
GJV XVPGBVF GWAAVK GJV XNBBXWPLK FNOCBVF MJPLG GZVOGR GNHVF, ZJNMJ LVHPNOF P LVMWLK GW GJNF KPR.

PUZZLE BY BEN BASS

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER 1. Rowing 2. Soccer 3. Judo 4. Skiing 5. Squash 6. Cricket 7. Tennis

KenKen





ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS PUZZLES

1	2	4	3
3	4	1	2
2	1	3	4
4	3	2	1

3	2	1	5	6	4
4	6	2	1	3	5
1	3	4	2	5	6
2	4	5	6	1	3
6	5	3	4	2	1
5	1	6	3	4	2

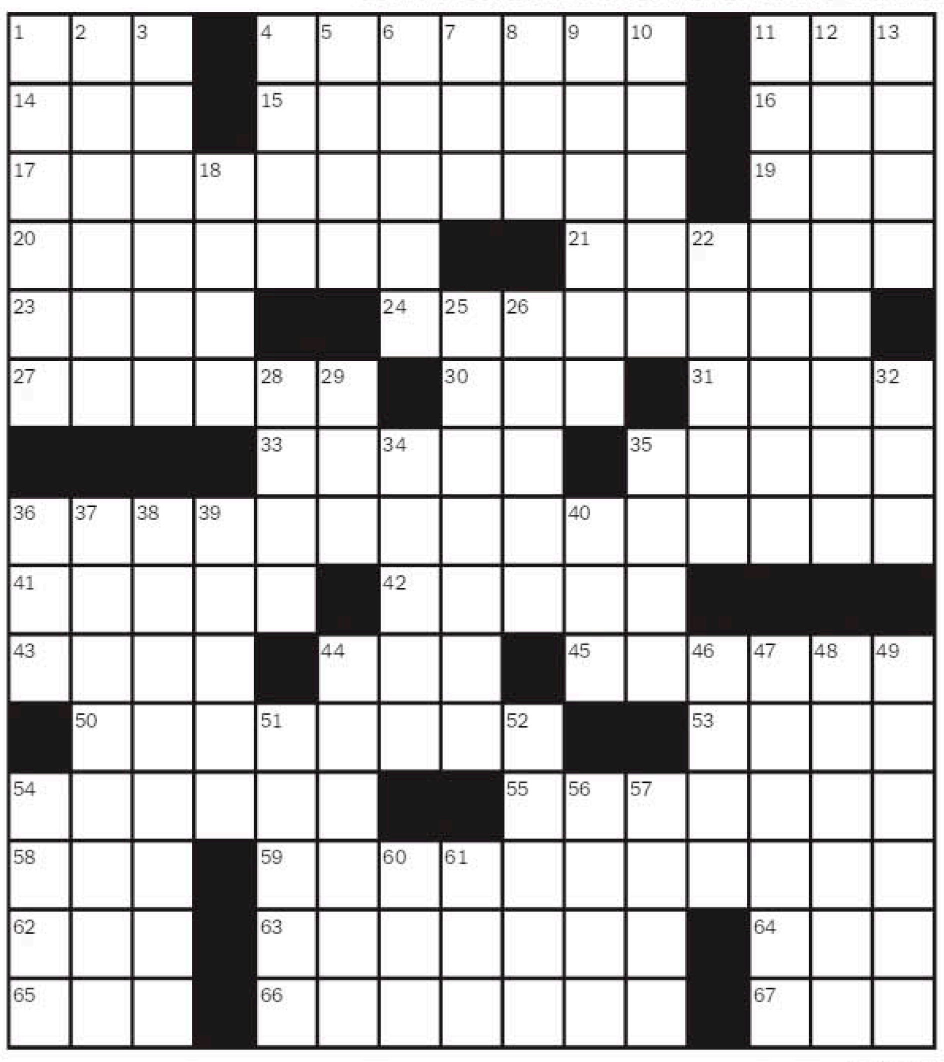
Fill the grid with digits so as not to repeat a digit in any row or column, and so that the digits within each heavily outlined box will produce the target number shown, by using addition, subtraction, multiplication or division, as indicated in the box. A 4x4 grid will use the digits 1-4. A 6x6 grid will use 1-6.

For more games: www.nytimes.com/games

KenKen® is a registered trademark of Nextoy, LLC. Copyright © 2023 www.KENKEN.com. All rights reserved.

Crossword | Edited by Will Shortz

PUZZLE BY KATHERINE BAICKER AND ADAM WAGNER



5/16/23

ACROSS

1 "Ripped" muscles
4 Instagram, Twitter and TikTok, informally
11 High-chair wear
14 Poet who quoth "Nevermore"
15 Big opportunity for scoring in hockey
16 Green: Prefix
17 Casualness … even though 18-Across doesn't mean urgency
19 Farm bales
20 [Puh-lease!]
21 Wyoming range
23 Texas city where Dr Pepper was invented
24 Lazy … even though 26-Across doesn't mean active
27 Formed
30 Bruins legend Bobby
31 Egotist's concern
33 First Black Disney princess
35 Actress Fisher of "Eighth Grade"
36 Flustered … even though 39-Across doesn't mean poised
41 Item that's been squirreled away?
42 Gets up
43 First thing a waiter brings to the table, usually
44 Dads
45 Gossipy types
50 Wrong name … even though 51-Across doesn't mean the right name
53 Actress Elisabeth
54 Tex-Mex snacks named after their inventor, Ignacio Anaya
55 "Don't wait!"
58 Letters before a criminal's alias, maybe
59 Not yet discovered … even though 60-Across doesn't mean discovered
62 The "p" of m.p.g.
63 Sushi wrapper
64 Medium for van Gogh
65 You ___ here (words on a mall map)
66 Che Guevara's given name
67 Understand

DOWN

1 Big name in nonprofit journalism
2 "In your face!"
3 ___ Falls Convention (milestone in the women's suffrage movement)
4 Neighborhood in N.Y.C. and London
5 Fiery gem
6 Large stringed instruments
7 Once ___ blue moon
8 Advice columnist Landers
9 Podium speaker
10 "Stainless" metal
11 "Tell me what you really think"
12 "Gotta tell you …"
13 Lost ___ ("Peter Pan" group)
18 Photo editing command
22 Maker of Models S, X and Y
25 Result of complete sound cancellation
26 Dribs and ___
28 School near Windsor Castle
29 De-lighted?
32 Cooked for
34 Biblical patriarch who had "ha" added to his name when he was 99 years old
35 Otherwise
36 Reservoir producer
37 Feature of many modern refrigerators
38 Big name in electric toothbrushes
39 Prospective sweetheart, say
40 Driver's one-eighty
44 Mike with the 2015 hit "I Took a Pill in Ibiza"
46 [Warning: Explicit content!]
47 Marvel supervillain
48 Dweller Down Under
49 Agree out of court
51 "Don't waste your time"
52 Zen garden tools
54 California wine valley
56 Tech site since 1994
57 Heading on a list of errands
60 Prohibition
61 She that may be sheared

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

Y	A	K	S		S	P	A	C	E		C	L	U	B
E	D	N	A		A	R	G	O	N		A	I	D	E
S	M	A	L	L	W	O	R	L	D		M	O	O	D
N	I	V	E	A		M	A	D		P	E	N	N	
O	N	E	S	T	E	P		F	A	I	R	S		
			L	I	T	T	L	E	L	E	A	G	U	E
A	R	S	O	N	S		E	E	L	S		A	S	L
H	O	N	G			P	O	T			S	T	E	M
E	T	A		S	C	A	N		L	A	K	E	R	S
M	I	C	R	O	B	R	E	W	E	R	Y			
		K	I	N	D	A		H	A	U	L	A	S	S
	I	F	F	Y		S	A	Y		B	I	C	E	P
R	O	O	F		T	I	N	Y	D	A	N	C	E	R
O	T	O	E		O	T	T	E	R		E	R	I	E
M	A	D	D		M	E	S	S	Y		S	A	N	E

Online subscriptions: Today's puzzle and more than 9,000 past puzzles, nytimes.com/crosswords ($39.95 a year).

Read about and comment on each puzzle: nytimes.com/wordplay.

DWIGHT GARNER | BOOKS OF THE TIMES

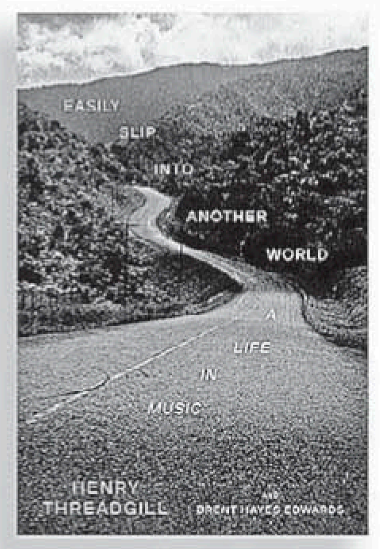
Vietnam Transformed How He Heard the World

Henry Threadgill's memoir unfolds from his youth to his maddening wartime experience to his music career.



ANTHONY BARBOZA/GETTY IMAGES

Henry Threadgill in 1983. Along with Ornette Coleman and Wynton Marsalis, he is one of the few jazz artists to have won a Pulitzer Prize.



Easily Slip Into Another World: A Life in Music
By Henry Threadgill and Brent Hayes Edwards
Illustrated. 403 pages. Alfred A. Knopf. $32.50.

IT'S RARE TO COME ACROSS a new Vietnam War memoir from a major publisher in 2023. Most were written decades ago, when memories were fresh and wounds still raw. That generation of soldiers has begun to pass away.

Henry Threadgill's "Easily Slip Into Another World" is an unusual entrant in the genre. For one thing, this astringent book is only in part about his war experience. The remainder is about his rebellious childhood in Chicago during the 1950s, his apprenticeship in that city's pyretic music scene and — later, after the war — his variegated career as a composer, saxophonist and flutist touring the world and becoming, along with Ornette Coleman and Wynton Marsalis, one of the few jazz artists to have won a Pulitzer Prize.

There's more here than an insane war story, in other words. In fact, "Easily Slip Into Another World" is so good a music memoir, in the serious and obstinate manner of those by Miles Davis and Gil Scott-Heron, that it belongs on a high shelf alongside them.

But this memoir rises toward, and then falls away from, Threadgill's war experience. It's the molten emotional core. Let's start there.

Threadgill enlisted in August 1966, when he was 22. He'd lost his draft deferment because he couldn't afford to attend Chicago's American Conservatory of Music full time. He didn't feel like a soldier. If he volunteered rather than wait to be drafted, he was told, he could continue to play music in the Army.

After basic training he was stationed at Fort Riley, in Kansas, in a band that performed at officers' dances when it wasn't out on the field playing heroic martial standards to soldiers leaving for combat.

The band got good, and Threadgill's arrangements (he'd been listening to Thelonious Monk, Igor Stravinsky and Cecil Taylor) grew complicated. When he was asked to arrange a medley of national classics — "God Bless America," "The Star-Spangled Banner" and others — for an important ceremony, he did so in a manner than added a bit of, in his words, "angularity and dissonance." He was trying to stretch the music, to see what he could get out of it.

A Catholic archbishop stood up during the event and called the arrangements blasphemous. Top brass snapped to attention. The ceremony was shut down. Threadgill was fired from the band and, to his shock and dismay, shipped off to the Fourth Infantry Division in Pleiku, Vietnam, in the thick of the fighting. A "musical peccadillo," Threadgill writes, had earned him a probable death sentence.

In Pleiku, Threadgill was nearly killed on multiple occasions. He was in a jeep that overturned, and he permanently injured his back. He spent nights waist-deep in water. His base camp was attacked during the Tet offensive. There are more strange harbingers than can be counted.

There were a lot of drugs, including the strongest pot imaginable, and plenty of music. Threadgill continued to play in bands and came across others. He makes you reconceptualize the musical template of the Vietnam War. There's no Hendrix and Creedence in his account; in the jungles around Pleiku, there's Coltrane and Coleman.

Threadgill gets the worst case of gonorrhea I've ever read about. His Army papers are lost and, in a "Catch-22" sort of nightmare, he's not sure he can prove who he is in order to go home. The madness is endless, and the endlessness is maddening. He isn't discharged until 1969. He's a different person.

"Easily Slip Into Another World" is about learning to hear the world, and Vietnam changed the way Threadgill did so. "It's like I grew a set of antennae over there," he writes. "When I returned, my reception equipment was different."

Threadgill wrote this book with Brent Hayes Edwards, a professor of English at Columbia University and a jazz writer. Some of their interview transcripts are included in small snippets, which let you see how close Threadgill's canny but philosophical speaking voice is to what's on the page. It's as if Edwards, as a sensitive amanuensis, guided a ball that was already rolling downhill.

Threadgill has always had a thing with titles. He plucks them out of the air. They insinuate. Among his songs are "Everybody Will Hang by the Leg" and "Spotted Dick Is Pudding." He writes:

> *Sometimes a work of art has a shadow title: a provisional nickname or draft label — something you call it as you're making it, but that doesn't end up being the final title when it matures. It's as though the work sloughs them off as it grows the way a snake sheds its skin.*

The shadow title of "Easily Slip Into Another World," he writes, was "Failure Is Everything." I'm glad he didn't call it that; too much has been written about creative failure recently, and the shadow title would have made this sound like a book for venture capitalists. But a lot of attention is paid to Threadgill's own failures, large and small. This is among the reasons that this memoir is the kind of book I'd want to place in the hands of young musicians. It's also about the obstacles Threadgill intentionally put in his own path.

He could have made an easier career as a sideman. He's a multi-instrumentalist and has always been in demand. He's frequently led bands of his own. But he decided early that he wanted to compose, and he fell in instead with the avant-garde art and theater communities in Chicago and in New York. He always made his own path. He peeled off two dozen musical skins. He was mostly a leaver, not a joiner. It was his personality to rock the boats he was supposed to steer.

This book's first 200 pages are so excellent that, if it had remained about that length, "Easily Slip Into Another World" would have been, in that reviewer's oxymoron, an instant classic. The last 200 pages drift. Band follows band, tour follows tour, commission follows commission. This is a memoir with a lot of area codes.

But Threadgill writes ardently about the barriers Black composers and classical musicians have faced. He also refuses, most of the time, to ratify the borders between classical music and jazz.

He makes the case, in his own fashion, that it takes a village to raise a musician. There are roll calls of family members, teachers and stray artists who helped him along the way. The milieu in Chicago meant everything. High schools have band rooms; Threadgill makes you wish every building had a band room.

This book works because Threadgill has a complex mind and tactile sense of life on this planet. It's always been hard to guess which way his beard is pointing. He writes, in a typical sentence:

> *Music is everything that makes the musician: family, friends, hardships, joys, the sounds on the street, how tight you buckle your belt, the person who happens to be sitting across from you in the subway car, what you ate for breakfast — all of it.*

ALEXIS SOLOSKI | THEATER REVIEW

Having Fun With a Tragedy Can Be a Cautionary Tale

A vivid production comes with gags and directorial flights.



JULIETA CERVANTES

Major Curda, far left, and Dorcas Leung in a sportive "Romeo and Juliet."

Romeo and Juliet
Through June 3 at the Lynn F. Angelson Theater in Manhattan; naatco.org. Running time: 2 hours 35 minutes.

"ROMEO AND JULIET" is at its core a cautionary tale of young love: Kiss a boy at a party one day, marry him the next, inside of a week you're both dead. Of Shakespeare's tragedies it is more propulsive than most, funnier and more modern, too, an amalgam of sex and death and a masquerade ball that requires little improvement. Cast a couple of charismatic leads, wind them up and let the bodies fall.

That doesn't mean that playwrights and directors shouldn't interrogate or adapt the text. They should. But what's puzzling about the "Romeo and Juliet" presented by the National Asian American Theater Company in partnership with Two River Theater is how little any of that adaptation adds.

Directed by Hansol Jung and Dustin Wills, who recently collaborated on "Wolf Play" at Soho Rep, and with what's billed as a "modern verse translation" by Jung, this is a sportive, vividly acted production that fails to make a convincing case for its many directorial flights and vernacular interventions. Jung and Wills have thrown much spaghetti at the "Romeo and Juliet" wall. The result is a lot of noodling around.

At 136 East 13th Street, usually the home of the Classic Stage Company, the set, designed by Junghyun Georgia Lee and lit by Joey Moro, is a wooden circle. This gestures toward the Elizabethan, as do Mariko Ohigashi's costumes, which combine long skirts and slashed doublets with T-shirts and jeans.

Jung's script walks this same line between early modern and contemporary, leaving some tranches of the play intact, but zhuzhing up other parts with new vocabulary and new jokes. In the first scene, for example, the prologue is delivered more or less intact, minus a "doth" here and there. Yet the first line of dialogue is "I swear, man, we can't be no one's suckers," which leads into some very filthy puns. (Are they bad puns? Yes. But so are Shakespeare's.)

Jung's interpolations are perhaps an improvement on the real first lines — an elaborate play on "collier" and "choler" — though specificity of acting and direction would have put the language across. And some of the substitutions, like "thrilled" for "proud," are even less necessary. Still, Jung is savvy enough to respect Shakespeare's rhythms and to match his word play, so there's pleasure in seeing her lively mind volley with his.

The script walks a line between early modern and contemporary.

The acting, from Major Curda's sad boy Romeo to Dorcas Leung's sweetheart Juliet to Mia Katigbak's warm, blunt Nurse, is uniformly strong. (Daniel Liu, playing a servant and Lady Capulet, is an actor to keep an eye on.) As actors of Asian descent don't always get equal opportunities to play classical roles, this alone justifies the production. Wills's direction doesn't always serve them, though. It's broad and busy, inclined toward clowning and with a habit of brazening out every sex joke. There are Brechtian gestures and live looping and Groucho Marx glasses and plastic fish littering the stage, which rob the story of momentum. Tybalt (Rob Kellogg), at one point, does the worm. Tragedy recedes.

Yet if you are or can remember being young and possessed of big, ungovernable feelings, "Romeo and Juliet" won't seem far away to you. Making the language and the dancing and the streetwear mirror our own time hasn't brought it any closer.

THEATER DIRECTORY
Your daily guide to theater

BROADWAY

PETER PAN GOES WRONG
ON BROADWAY THRU JULY 9 ONLY!
"KNOCKED UNCONSCIOUS WITH LAUGHTER!" - The New York Times
"THIS FARCE DESERVES TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. A TOTAL BLAST!" - Chris Jones, Chicago Tribune
PETER PAN GOES WRONG
DIRECT FROM LONDON
Featuring The Original Mischief Company
Today at 7, Wed at 2, Thu at 7
Fri at 8, Sat at 2 & 8, Sun at 2 & 7
Telecharge.com or 212.239.6200
PanGoesWrongBway.com
Groups (10+): 1-800-BROADWAY x2
Barrymore Theatre (+), 243 W. 47th St.

SIX
WINNER OF 23 AWARDS
Including The
2022 TONY AWARD FOR BEST ORIGINAL SCORE
"A POP-ROCK AVALANCHE!" - New York Magazine
BROADWAY'S "EUPHORIC CELEBRATION!" - Entertainment Weekly
The New York Times Critic's Pick
SIX
Written by 2022 Tony Award Winners
TOBY MARLOW & LUCY MOSS
Wed at 7, Thu at 7
Fri at 8, Sat at 3 & 8, Sun at 2 & 7
SixOnBroadway.com
Groups (10+): 1-800-BROADWAY x2
Lena Horne Theatre (+), 256 W. 47 St

LIMITED ENGAGEMENTS

ASI WIND's INNER CIRCLE
NEW YORK TIMES CRITIC'S PICK
"ASTONISHING! ONE OF THE FINEST PRACTITIONERS OF CLOSE-UP MAGIC WORKING TODAY. A MASTER AT THE TOP OF HIS GAME." -THE NEW YORK TIMES
"#1 MAGIC SHOW IN NYC!" -TIME OUT NY
"DAZZLING AND ASTONISHING!" -THE NEW YORKER
David Blaine Presents
ASI WIND'S INNER CIRCLE
www.AsiWind.com
Judson Theatre
243 Thompson Street
(Across from Washington Square Park)
Now extended through September 3

THIS SIGN (+) WHEN FOLLOWING THE NAME OF A THEATER, INDICATES THAT A SHOW IS EQUIPPED WITH AN INFRARED ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICE.

JEOPARDY!
CLUE OF THE DAY
AUTHORS
IN 1960 JEAN-PAUL SARTRE WROTE OF THIS MAN'S "VICTORIOUS ATTEMPT ... TO SNATCH EVERY INSTANT OF HIS EXISTENCE FROM HIS FUTURE DEATH"
FOR THE CORRECT RESPONSE, WATCH JEOPARDY! TONIGHT OR LOOK IN THIS SPACE TOMORROW IN THE TIMES.
Yesterday's Response: WHAT IS ROLLING STONE?
Watch JEOPARDY!
7 p.m. on Channel 7



MICHAEL GEORGE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The conductor David Bloom rehearsing the ensemble Contemporaneous, which will play "Stranger Love." Lileana Blain-Cruz is directing the opera.

It Happens Just One Night: A Six-Hour Opera

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1
sky presentations.

"Young, emerging artists who have big ideas deserve a place for that work to be seen," said Chad Smith, the Philharmonic's chief executive. "If the big institutions are not swinging for the rafters, why are we here?"

Directed by Lileana Blain-Cruz and played by Contemporaneous — the ensemble Mattingly founded as an undergraduate at Bard College with David Bloom, who will conduct — "Stranger Love" is not exactly Puccini, even if it does sketch a kind of love story. Largely abstract and intensely earnest, slowly telescoping into the cosmic sphere, it offers a heightened experience more than it does a concrete plot.

"The mood of the piece is something special," said the composer John Adams, long a friend and mentor to Mattingly. "I believe the length of it is part of its spiritual — what can I say? — its spiritual impetus."

"Stranger Love" recalls two other operas that sustain a time-suspending tone of meditative ecstasy for many hours, Philip Glass and Robert Wilson's "Einstein on the Beach" and Olivier Messiaen's "Saint François d'Assise." Its sensibility was shaped by a CD Mattingly grew up with that featured the Tahitian Choir: "This glorious, polyphonic, joyous sound," he said, "that's moving around itself and congealing and drifting apart." The early Minimalism of Glass is there, too, in the score's vast expanses of shifting harmonies and repeating rhythms.

Three pianos, each tuned slightly differently, give a woozy, honky-tonk feel to some of the music, and sometimes offer a clangorous evocation of gamelan, a tie to the open-eared, pan-Pacific California spirit of Harry Partch and Lou Harrison.

There's some of the lush overripeness of Messiaen's "Turangalîla-Symphonie" and the billowing fragrance of Debussy. And echoes of the stylized approach to character and the deceptively simple, sometimes almost childlike sound world of Meredith Monk's wordless opera "Atlas," which Mattingly said he listened to every night for a year before he began "Stranger Love."

His piece seems to float above the current-events themes of so much in new music. "It's not telling you who to vote for or where to stand on an issue," Bartscherer said, "but it's asking that you imagine a world that could be otherwise."

Blain-Cruz said: "I also think the dedication to joy is an interesting politics. The dedication to fighting for the beauty in life, for people to see that and appreciate it. Like, don't kill our world; let's see it in its splendor and see that it's worth fighting for."

Bartscherer's spare text manages references to Anne Carson, Octavio Paz and Matthew Arnold, among others. A writer, translator and scholar, he was among Mattingly's first professors at Bard, and quickly became a fan of Contemporaneous after its founding in 2010. Leaving one of the group's concerts, Bartscherer had a vague idea for a piece of music theater: There would be two voices in love whose relationship develops, facing symbolic conflict from within and without, before resolving, all during a cycle of the four seasons.

He shared the notion with Mattingly, who had been composing since he was 6 but had been wanting to try writing vocal music. Passing material back and forth, they were soon off to the races; the two talk about "Stranger Love" almost as something that already existed complete, in some realm, needing to be discovered or channeled more than consciously created.

'We went into it thinking it would never happen, because how could it?'
DYLAN MATTINGLY
'STRANGER LOVE' COMPOSER

"It was there, somewhere," Bartscherer said. "And Dylan's antenna was hearing it somehow."

At a certain point, they abandoned trying to corral the project into a traditionally manageable length, embracing the kind of epic world-building that Mattingly loved in "The Lord of the Rings" and "Battlestar Galactica." On a 2014 visit to Point Reyes, on the California coast, Mattingly had a vision: The already sprawling score that he and Bartscherer had been working on was just Act I.

In this new conception, two more acts would follow, in which the voices would gradually drop out and the opera's scope would expand to encompass, first, human lovers beyond the initial pair, and then the expanding universe.

It took years to finish, even given Mattingly's single-minded focus. "Sometimes you have students, and you talk to them, and it takes two years to know that what you're talking about got into their daily life," said the composer David Lang, one of Mattingly's teachers during graduate school at Yale. "But he made music so fluidly, and in such a dedicated fashion, that everything we were talking about immediately came out in the work."

Mattingly and Bartscherer briefly thought about producing "Stranger Love" themselves, perhaps in an airplane hangar, but it was clear the cost would be prohibitive without an institutional partner. There were a lot of ignored emails from arts organizations; some who replied said that they couldn't say yes without seeing it first.

A concert performance of the nearly four-hour first act, presented by Beth Morrison and the Prototype festival in 2018, proved the material's viability — to its creators, at least. But it was only when Adams encouraged Smith of the Los Angeles Philharmonic to take a look at the score, and Mattingly began to send along recorded clips, that "Stranger Love," long finished, was ex post facto commissioned by the Philharmonic for a staged production.

Blain-Cruz said that her staging aimed to be "both super simple and super grand," with projections (designed by Hannah Wasileski) that evoke the natural world and beyond. Chris Emile's choreography has been inspired by the cyclical movements of the planets and seasons.

"Chris as a choreographer is someone who's tapped into — not lightly or glibly, but tapped into spirit," Blain-Cruz said. "All of his physical work, it reaches levels of possession in some ways. Dylan mentions gospel music and spiritual music, riling people up to make themselves open. And I think the choreography matches that."

Will "Stranger Love" live beyond Saturday? Mattingly has dreamed of doing it at the Park Avenue Armory in New York. But in the meantime, he and Bartscherer are already at work on another project. They claim that it will be shorter, but the title — "History of Life" — doesn't give the sense that their scope has gotten any less ambitious.

"I did voice my concern," Adams said, "that Dylan was creating a body of work that was always going to be a challenge to produce. And then I felt like a terrible old dad, like, 'Are you going to get a job?' He's willing to just live an extremely modest life, absolutely devoted to his art."

Chad Smith Hired to Lead the Boston Symphony

The move is another big loss for the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

By JAVIER C. HERNÁNDEZ

Chad Smith, a veteran arts leader who has helped turn the Los Angeles Philharmonic into one of the most innovative orchestras in the United States, will leave his post this fall to become president and chief executive of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, both ensembles announced on Monday.

Smith, 51, who has been the Los Angeles Philharmonic's chief executive since 2019, said in an interview that the pandemic had made him rethink his priorities.

"I really have thought a lot about my journey here, and I'm ready for a change," he said. "Change is also healthy for everyone."

Smith's departure is a significant loss for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, which is still reeling from the announcement in February that its superstar maestro, Gustavo Dudamel, would leave in 2026 to become the next music director of the New York Philharmonic.

Smith said that his move was unrelated to the coming departure of Dudamel, with whom he has worked closely in promoting contemporary music and expanding the orchestra's youth education programs. He said that he felt it was the right moment now that the worst of the pandemic appeared to be over and audiences were once again returning to concert halls.

"My decision was my own, and I know that Gustavo's decision was his own," he said. "It will provide the opportunity for the organization in L.A. to have a new artistic and executive leadership team to really move into the future."

Smith will take the helm of the Boston Symphony at a time of tumult and division. The orchestra has in recent years built a reputation for artistic and financial success, winning Grammy Awards and amassing an endowment of $484 million. But after the retirement in 2021 of the orchestra's longtime leader, Mark Volpe, the organization entered a chaotic period.

Several senior leaders and staff members have departed, including Volpe's successor, Gail Samuel, the orchestra's first female president and chief executive, who abruptly resigned in December, just 18 months into her tenure. (Samuel also came from the Los Angeles Philharmonic.)

The turmoil has alarmed the Boston Symphony's musicians, staff, board and patrons. The orchestra's leaders, including the board chair, Barbara W. Hostetter, a philanthropist, have declined to speak publicly about the problems. In a statement on Monday, Hostetter praised Smith's appointment, saying that it would "usher in a new era of many exciting opportunities."

Smith said he was not intimidated by the troubles in Boston, adding, "The B.S.O. is going through things that all organizations go through at certain times." He said he would work to bring stability to the orchestra and to help it rethink its identity and mission.

"There are a lot of questions you have to ask," he said. "Who do we want to be? What are those things that are absolutely essential? And where can we can continue to grow and expand and think differently about who we are and how we connect with audiences in our communities?"



KAYANA SZYMCZAK

Chad Smith is leaving his post as chief executive of the Los Angeles Philharmonic to become president and chief executive of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Smith said that he would work to bring more racial, ethnic and gender diversity to the orchestra, which is less diverse than some comparable institutions. And he said that he was eager to keep Andris Nelsons, the music director in Boston since 2014, whose contract expires in 2025, calling him an "extraordinary musician."

The challenges in Boston are familiar to Smith, who has spent 21 years at the Los Angeles Philharmonic, previously serving as its chief operating officer and vice president of artistic planning, developing a reputation for innovative programming and for forging ties to contemporary composers. He became chief executive in 2019 after the abrupt resignation of Simon Woods, who had been in the job for less than two years.

Like the Boston Symphony, the Philharmonic has been known for its artistic and financial success. Both institutions have benefited from having robust, and highly lucrative, outdoor summer offerings: the Hollywood Bowl in California, and Tanglewood in Massachusetts.

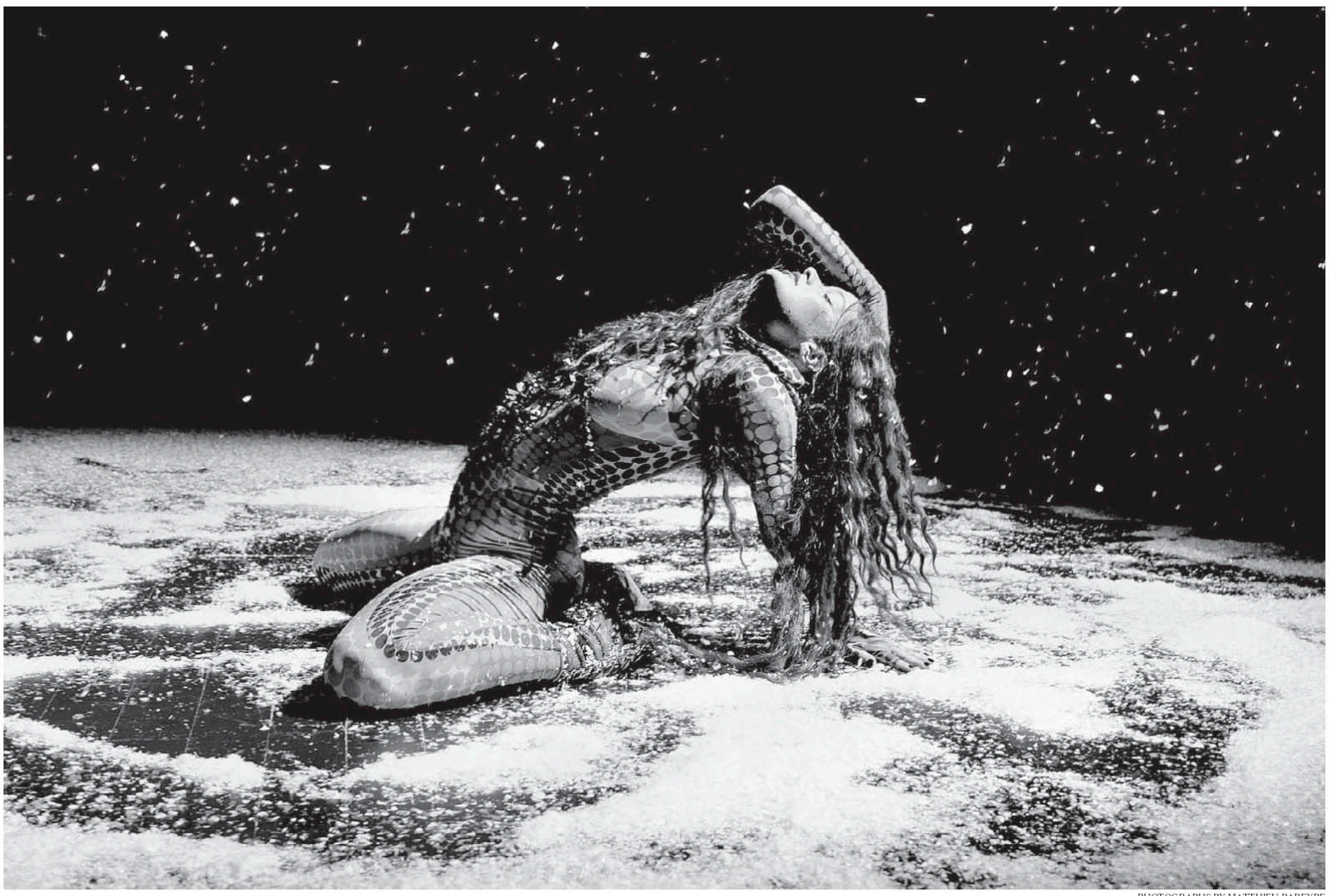
The loss of Smith will create a void in Los Angeles, where the orchestra beginning to search for a successor to Dudamel. Thomas L. Beckmen, chairman of the orchestra's board, said in a statement that the Philharmonic was "confident our next leader will carry forward our values and vision and inspire the L.A. Phil to even greater heights."

Dudamel expressed his gratitude to Smith in a statement, noting that the "only constant in life is change" and pledging to "give everything I can to the L.A. Phil and our wonderful audiences" during the remainder of his tenure.

Smith's move to Boston will be a homecoming of sorts. He studied European history at Tufts University and has a bachelor's and a master's degree in vocal performance from the New England Conservatory. He often attended Boston Symphony concerts while Seiji Ozawa was music director.

He recalled a memorial concert for the composer Aaron Copland. "I still get chills thinking about that," Smith said. "It's something I come back to very often about why I love the orchestral world and the orchestral music."

LAURA CAPPELLE | THEATER REVIEW



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATTHIEU BAREYRE

Deep Into the Internet's Darkest Corners

The French director Marion Siéfert swings big as she explores the dynamics of online grooming.

Daddy
Through May 26 at the Odéon-Théâtre de l'Europe in Paris; theatre-odeon.eu.

PARIS — The French stage director Marion Siéfert has her finger on the pulse of our digital lives. In "2 or 3 Things I Know About You," she playfully tackled oversharing on Facebook, before turning to the perils of online streaming in "_jeanne_dark_" — a show that fell foul of Instagram's moderation policies when it was relayed live on the platform.

With "Daddy," a sharp, no-holds-barred new production at the Odéon-Théâtre de l'Europe, in Paris, Siéfert has ventured even further into the internet's dark corners. In it, a 13-year-old is groomed online by a man and gets lost in a virtual reality game that exploits teenage girls for profit.

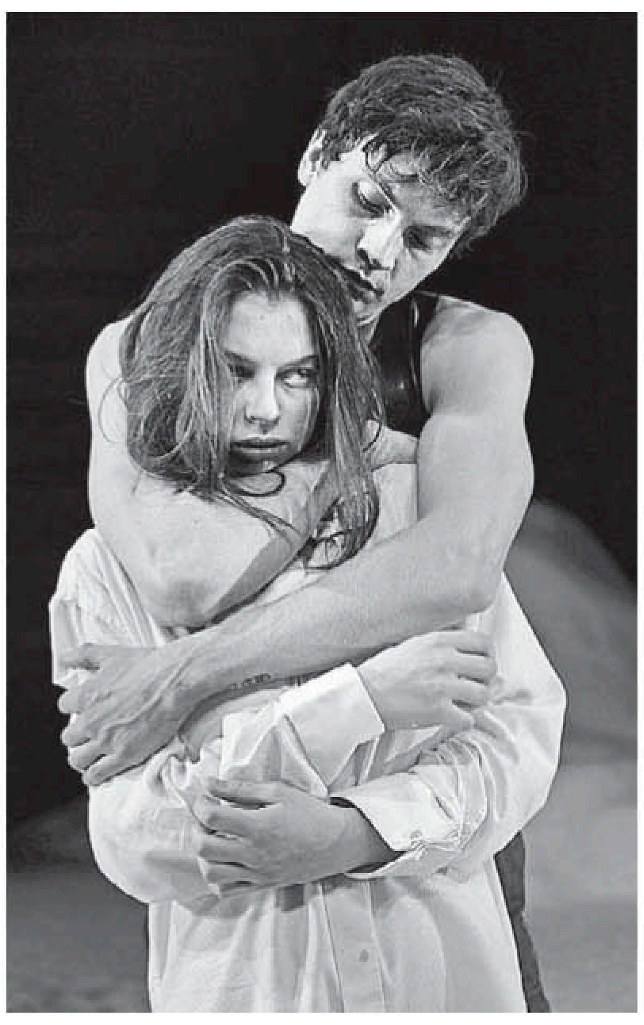
It also marks a new stage in Siéfert's career. "Daddy" is her first big-budget production for a major playhouse and one of the Paris season's most anticipated premieres. So Siéfert is swinging much bigger, on every level: larger cast, more atmospheric sets and a somewhat indulgent running time of three and a half hours. Yet her biting originality remains intact.

Reality is no match for screen entertainment in "Daddy." The central character, Mara, is a quiet teenager from southern France. A subtly written scene, early on, introduces her family: Her parents, a nurse and a security guard, are too exhausted by their poor-paying jobs to devote much attention to their daughters. It's no surprise that whenever she can, Mara escapes to the brighter landscape of online gaming.

In an unnamed video game, she joins Julien, a smooth-talking 27-year-old who is her frequent online partner in crime. The easy intimacy they have built is showcased through a spectacular video sequence: On a screen the size of the Odéon's stage, we see a 3-D game designed by the video artist Antoine Briot in which Mara and Julien's avatars shoot at enemies with assault rifles before hopping on fluorescent skateboards.

Throughout, we hear Mara and Julien banter over their headsets. "You're the most badass girl in this game," Julien says.

The groundwork is laid for the abusive dynamic that ensues. When they first meet outside the game, on a video call, Mara confides in Julien that she dreams of being an actress. He compliments her, and tells her about "Daddy" — a new game that allows players, Julien says, to become avatars sponsored by sugar daddies, and showcase their talents to a "fan base."



Top, Jennifer Gold delivers cabaret-style numbers in "Daddy." Right, Louis Peres and Lila Houel are the central performers in the play, written by Marion Siéfert and Matthieu Bareyre.

Siéfert has a knack for assembling captivatingly unconventional actors, and just as "_jeanne_dark_" was tailor-made for Helena de Laurens, a shape-shifter unafraid to lean into grotesque physicality, "Daddy" owes much to its two central performers. As Mara, the 15-year-old Lila Houel, who came to the production with limited stage experience, is coarsely candid in these early scenes, with turns of phrase that emphasize the character's working-class background. Opposite her, Louis Peres, best known as a screen actor, is a startling tech-generation descendant of Christian Bale in "American Psycho": clean-cut, in control, smoothly scary.

Siéfert's smartest move is to leave video and special effects behind once the two enter the game world of "Daddy." The virtual space becomes a sinister, near-empty stage dotted with what look like snow mounds, where Mara encounters other preyed-upon young women.

The rules of "Daddy" aren't wholly clear. Men invest so teenage girls can perform routines that earn them points with fans. Houel, for instance, interprets a scene from the movie "Interview With the Vampire"; the sparkling Jennifer Gold, who plays the game's reigning star, Jessica, delivers cabaret-style numbers, including Marilyn Monroe's "My Heart Belongs to Daddy" from the 1960 film "Let's Make Love."

The points and the fans are never shown — Siéfert keeps things deliberately vague. The focus is on the dynamics of child abuse, and the erosion of Mara's individuality and willpower by Julien. While some scenes of verbal and physical violence are troubling enough to make you fear for Houel's mental health, she rises to the occasion with astonishing sang-froid, quietly haunted then seething in the second act.

Siéfert wrote "Daddy" with Matthieu Bareyre, and some of the points they make don't need so much time to come across: Cuts would be welcome. Yet "Daddy" speaks to the spirit of the age and the lives of teenagers today with a mix of ease and critical distance that few stage directors can match.

And even at 11:30 p.m., one final scene had the audience sitting up and leaning forward. After a bloody narrative twist, the back wall of the stage slid away to reveal the street outside, and a performer staggered out of the game into the Odéon's leafy neighborhood — while a few passers-by stopped, puzzled, to peek at the action onstage. In Siéfert's theater, the real and the virtual keep colliding in invigorating ways.

JAMES PONIEWOZIK | CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

Democracy Goes Up in Smoke on the Latest 'Succession'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1

to the Republican Mencken.

After watching the previous episode, I sketched out a scenario in which the Roys' network, ATN, has to take sides in a contested election, with the fate of the deal at stake. This doesn't make me Nostradamus. "Succession" is predictable in the best way. It simply sets up conditions, gives characters motivations, then lets them act in their interests. It's only as unpredictable as you fool yourself into believing it is.

So there's chaos and opportunity. There's a fire and an election call that, while not carrying the force of law, would determine the narrative advantage in a legal (or extralegal) showdown.

For America, it's the choice between remaining a country where elections are won with ballots or becoming one where they're won with torches. For the Roy siblings (minus Connor, conceding the end of his libertarian vanity campaign), it's a golden jump ball, and each one of them reacts in character.

Roman, who has always vibed with Mencken's edgelord energy, sees no reason not to get on the good side of a history-smashing win. Roman knows who Mencken is, better than any of the Roys do; in Season 3, it was to him that Mencken expressed his openness to borrowing ideas from "H," his pet name for Hitler. But what's a little fascism between friends?

This had to be a rough episode for Team Roman, the "Succession" fans who love his broken-toy impishness and "Clockwork Orange" banter. He *is* funny, even while electing a white nationalist, telling his sister, Shiv, "It's only spicy because if my team wins, they're going to shoot your team." That's exactly what has always made him dangerous. Does he endorse Mencken's worldview sincerely or ironically? Does it matter? Does an ironic arson fire burn any cooler?

His siblings respond with different flavors of ineffectiveness. Shiv, once a Democratic operative, is horrified at the "nightmare" of a President Mencken. But not horrified enough to sabotage her own schemes. Given the chance to ask the Jimenez campaign to promise to kill the Waystar sale — a deal she has been secretly working against her brothers to make happen — she fakes a call instead, and gets caught out. It's a double-or-nothing bet with democracy as her stake, and she loses.

Kendall, meanwhile, resists with the force of a wall of Jell-O, telling Roman, "I don't necessarily feel good about this." *Necessarily*: On "Succession," statements of principle are always hedged.

Kendall knows the stakes too. He wants to be good, or to be seen as good, and his daughter recently had an upsetting run-in on the street with an alt-right racist. But he also wants to win his company back. As often happens when he can't reconcile his self-interest with his self-conception, he shuts down like a glitching robot, until learning of Shiv's betrayal pushes him to push ATN to call the election.

His anger at Shiv is a reason, but it's not the reason. As usual on "Succession," this is about the money, and the dysfunctional family competition in which the money keeps score. As the brothers argue, Roman accuses Kendall of "big brother"-ing the election call, using seniority to get his way, just as Kendall did at dinner time when they were kids.

If only little Roman had gotten steak, we might have gotten democracy.

In our reality, of course, the ordinary pressures of the cable news business might have sufficed to force the call, deal or no deal, steak or chicken. As we just saw in the Dominion voting machines libel trial, Fox News — the none-too-subtle real-life analogue to ATN — indulged election theft hoaxes simply to try to hang on to its existing audience (at an eventual cost of hundreds of millions of dollars so far and potentially more).

"America Decides" plays as if the writers committed the pretrial discovery file to memory. The episode follows Tom Wambsgans, Shiv's estranged husband and ATN's head, through an ulcer-making election night. He is sleep deprived and coked up, under pressure to deliver big ratings for the Roys and scary antifa stories for his audience, which is getting raw, uncut propaganda from ATN's farther-right competitors.

An ulcer-making election night at a fake news network.

This was much the dynamic at work in the internal messages disclosed in the Dominion suit, which showed Fox stars and executives freaking out over competitors like Newsmax, who were gaining traction by embracing the election-fraud lie. (And of course, Fox's worries stemmed from viewers' fury over election night, particularly about the network calling Arizona for soon-to-be President Biden.)

Asked why ATN isn't reporting the evidence that the ballots were torched by Menckenite brownshirts, Tom says, "We need to respect our viewership" — phrasing almost verbatim from the Fox messages. "Respecting this audience whether we agree or not is critical," the host Sean Hannity texted after the 2020 election.

So ATN brings out its sneering alt-rightist, Mark Ravenhead, to insinuate that the fire was a false flag, while Tom suggests booking an egghead historian to tell viewers that everything is fine and normal. "Succession" has always had a feel for how the shamelessness of extremists defeats, and is enabled by, the flaccid reasonableness of centrists.

Of course, ATN, like Fox, operates in a larger media environment, and the episode is less clear on how election night is playing elsewhere, especially on PGN, the in-world analog to CNN. There's a brief clip suggesting that PGN, and presumably other mainstream news, is treating the election as undecided while the legal process plays out. (On a story level, this suggests that the election and Waystar Royco's fate may have a few turns yet to take.)



Nicholas Braun, left, and Matthew Macfadyen in "Succession," in which world events hinge on a dysfunctional family competition.

MACALL POLAY/HBO

In our reality, mainstream outlets have their own pressures and owners. CNN, which is part of Warner Bros. Discovery, has a new head, Chris Licht, and a reported new corporate mandate to reposition after years of pugilistically covering Donald J. Trump during his presidency.

CNN spent the 2020 campaign trying to learn the lessons of 2016 by scaling back on airing live Trump rallies and assertively fact-checking him in detail. Now — knowing full well that the former president tried to overturn a democratic election — it seems determined to spend the 2024 campaign unlearning the lessons of 2020.

Thus last week, CNN granted Trump an hour of live TV to be as dishonest about the attempts to overturn the last election as you knew he would be if, at any point in the past few years, you watched CNN. While the town hall moderator, Kaitlan Collins, interjected corrections, he boisterously played his "rigged election" hits to a cheering crowd.

CNN got a spectacle; the former president got a live platform for another dominance-politics performance. The morning after the town hall, Licht reportedly told the CNN staff: "Kaitlan pressed him again and again and again and made news. Made a *lot* of news." And, he said, "that is our job."

Here, life echoes "Succession" once more. At the end of election night, with ballots burning and Mencken delivering a dog-whistley speech about making America "clean," Roman insists that nothing he or ATN did that night was that bad or consequential. "We just made a night of good TV," he says. When the smoke clears, you can always tell yourself that you didn't start the fire.

To Be Seen as More Than Trans

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1

transgender woman and an actress best known for playing a stripper in "Hustlers" (2019) and a yoga teacher on "Transparent" (2014-19), Amazon's dark comedy about a baby boomer transgender woman, played by Jeffrey Tambor.

"Monica" made waves at last year's Venice Film Festival, where it premiered to acclaim as the first movie with an openly transgender lead to compete there. Lysette is in almost every scene, captured by Pallaoro's camera in sometimes jarringly extreme detail.

Lysette said her favorite moment in the film is a tranquil one: Dressed in a bathing suit, Monica sits on a dock holding a baby in sunlight.

"It's such a beautiful portrait because it's so rare that you get to see a trans woman being maternal and being carefree," she said. It's one of many moments in "Monica" that Lysette hopes might change at least one mind as the film hits theaters during a politically treacherous moment for the transgender community.

"The only way we are going to get past this hate and messed-up legislation is if the other side can see themselves in us," she said.

In a phone interview, Clarkson said she quickly connected with Lysette, and the two developed an intimacy as near to mother and daughter as two strangers can be. In one heart-rending scene, as Monica bathes her mother, the two women have a nonverbal moment of recognition — an example of how Lysette is "capable of a piercing stillness," said Clarkson.

"Great actors, like Trace, when they're called upon to enter incredibly deep and dark emotional places, have to be willing to let their unique selves come through," she said. "The body can put up guards and filters every day. But when she arrived on set, she was completely available and breathtaking."

When asked what people should know about Lysette, Alexandra Billings, Lysette's "Transparent" co-star, said: "She's one of the smartest people I've ever met."

"When you look at her, because we are a culture so full of misogyny, we think there's no way there can be a brain attached," said Billings by phone. "Every single piece of advice she's given me was spot on."

As for parallels between Monica's life and her own, Lysette said that after a challenging few years, she's in "a good place" with her own mother, whom she came out to as transgender when Lysette was in her teens.

"The tool kit that parents had in the '90s is not the same tool kit they have to deal with their children coming out as trans in 2023," said Lysette, who gave her age as "on the cusp of Gen X and Millennial." "What I realize is that my mom did the best she could. I forgave my mom a long time ago."

Lysette was born in Kentucky but grew up in Dayton, Ohio, where she started doing drag in high school before performing at area clubs with drag queens and transgender women working in a drag context. Nightlife was where she met her transgender godmother of sorts, the entertainer Jareje Rashad, "the spitting image of Toni Braxton," as Lysette put it, before moving to New York at 20. "It was a magical moment when I met her," Lysette said. "There was a seed planted."

In conversation, Lysette has an accentuate-the-positive outlook — remnants of a Midwestern politesse, perhaps — that she admitted to using to find good in even the darkest memories.

That was the case as she discussed "Transparent." Lysette was one of several actresses who in 2017 claimed Tambor sexually harassed her on set, accusing him in a statement of having "made many sexual advances and comments."

It was amid those allegations that Tambor left the show after the fourth season.

When asked to reflect on "Transparent," Lysette took a long pause, then said: "I'm grateful that I got to be on such a critically acclaimed show. I learned a lot from watching Judith Light work. I think it's part of the timeline of trans representation. Was it perfect? No. But it did open the door for a lot of other things."

Yet when asked to assess the opportunities for transgender actors in a post-"Pose" world — in which the popular show about ballroom culture made transgender actors and characters household names — her grade was "D minus."

"There are a lot of people who talk the talk but don't walk the walk in terms of greenlighting trans stories, with us creating them, producing them, starring in them," she said. "I really think the industry as a whole doesn't quite understand what they're missing."

Lysette is back auditioning, and as she enters each room, she said, she hopes to be seen "as a leading lady and not just as a trans actor."

"I want them to say, she's studied her craft, she's put in the work and that it's been a slow boil, not a microwave," she said. "And that she's ready for more."



RYAN PFLUGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Trace Lysette played a stripper in the movie "Hustlers" and a yoga teacher on the Amazon series "Transparent."

Despite Nazi Shadow, Christie's Jewelry Sale Sets Record

The auction of items from an Austrian heiress's estate drew $202 million and criticism.

By ZACHARY SMALL

Criticism from historians and Jewish organizations did little to dim the sale at Christie's of jewels bought with a fortune built in part atop profits made from the Aryanization of Jewish businesses during the Holocaust.

In bidding online and in person in Geneva, the sale of jewelry from the estate of Heidi Horten, an Austrian philanthropist, has brought in $202 million, making it the most successful jewelry sale in history.

The sales figures for some 400 lots surpassed the $137 million that was spent on Elizabeth Taylor's collection in 2011. The auction house said 98 percent of the Horten lots sold, and there is another large sale of roughly 300 lots from the collection scheduled for November.

Christie's has faced substantial criticism about the sale because of Horten's husband, Helmut Horten, a German businessman and billionaire, who began to amass his fortune by purchasing at a discount the businesses of Jews forced by circumstances or edict to sell their companies during the Holocaust.

"In a time of Holocaust denial and the resurgence of antisemitism around the world, we find it especially appalling that a world-renowned auction house would engage in such a sale," wrote Yoram Dvash, president of the World Federation of Diamond Bourses, in a recent letter to François Curiel, the auction house's chairman of Europe and Asia.

Christie's officials have said they chose to move forward with the sale despite the criticism because the proceeds are going to the Heidi Horten Foundation, which supports medical research and a museum containing her art collection. The auction house also pledged to donate some of its proceeds to Holocaust research and education.

David Schaecter, president of Holocaust Survivors' Foundation USA, which represents support groups for victims' families in the United States, called the sale "appalling" and said it had perpetuated "a disgraceful pattern of whitewashing Holocaust profiteers."

Anthea Peers, president of Christie's Europe, Middle East and Africa, responded to Schaecter in an email in which she said, "Christie's seeks to work to salvage some good from one of the most painful periods in global history, and to preserve the memory of those who were tragically its victims." She declined to say what organizations would receive funding, saying it was up to those groups to identify themselves.

When Helmut Horten died in 1987, his widow inherited nearly $1 billion and became one of the wealthiest women in Austria. She died last year, only days after her museum in Vienna opened.

In 2020, the heiress commissioned a report from a historian, Peter Hoeres, to investigate the nature of her late husband's wealth. Hoeres has described his report as a mixed view of Horten in which he found that the businessman had undoubtedly profited from the duress of Jews but was motivated by an opportunistic business sense rather than the antisemitism of the Nazis, with whom he ultimately had a falling out.

The debate did little to slow the bidding last week. Half the lots on Wednesday sold for above $1 million, including a Bulgari ring with a large pink diamond that sold for nearly double its high estimate at $10 million with buyer's fees. After one day, the sale had exceeded the $150 million that Christie's had estimated it might bring in. Additional bidding on Friday raised another $42 million.

Her husband had bought up Jews' businesses during the Holocaust.

In its marketing for the auction, Christie's described the 700 jewels as "unparalleled" and "a true embodiment of Mrs. Horten's timeless elegance, glamour and taste for collecting." The sale's promotional materials on the auction house's website did not initially include any mention of Helmut Horten's connection to the Nazis, but language referencing his purchase of Jewish businesses was later added and the auction house announced its plan to donate some of its fees.

Two lawyers wrote to Christie's last week expressing concerns that the sale might have violated the restitution rights of the heirs of Holocaust victims. One of them, Steven Lieberman of Washington, said he represented an heir of a business appropriated by Helmut Horten.

The second lawyer, Nitsana Darshan-Leitner, who leads the Israeli law center Shurat HaDin, told the auction house that "any potential buyers of these items should be placed on notice of the Hortens' connection to the coercion and theft of Jewish property during the Holocaust."

Auction house officials have said none of the 700 jewels for sale had been bought from, or confiscated from, Jews during the Holocaust era. But critics had still expressed concern about the source of some of the fortune that enabled them to be purchased.



CHRISTIE'S, VIA AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Among the gems and pieces that Christie's sold from the estate of Heidi Horten was a diamond and emerald bracelet by Bulgari.

WHO IN THEIR RIGHT MIND WOULD WANT TO READ THIS MEMOIR?

"The book was damn near addictive. That Patterson guy can write."

—RON HOWARD

"A compelling account of the life events that shaped an extraordinary man."

—NICHOLAS SPARKS

"James Patterson's memoir is educational, and reveals a lot of who he is. The book is aways entertaining."

—PHIL KNIGHT
Founder of Nike, author of *Shoe Dog*

"One of the greatest storytellers of all time. Patterson has led an amazing life. *James Patterson by James Patterson* brings to mind Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast.*"

—PATRICIA CORNWELL

"I felt I was interviewing James Patterson under the highest permissible dose of sodium pentothal, the truth serum, for hours...and he spilled the whole story of his truly astonishing life."

—BOB WOODWARD

"The master storyteller of our times takes us on a funny, poignant, and ultimately triumphant journey. You'll love this one."

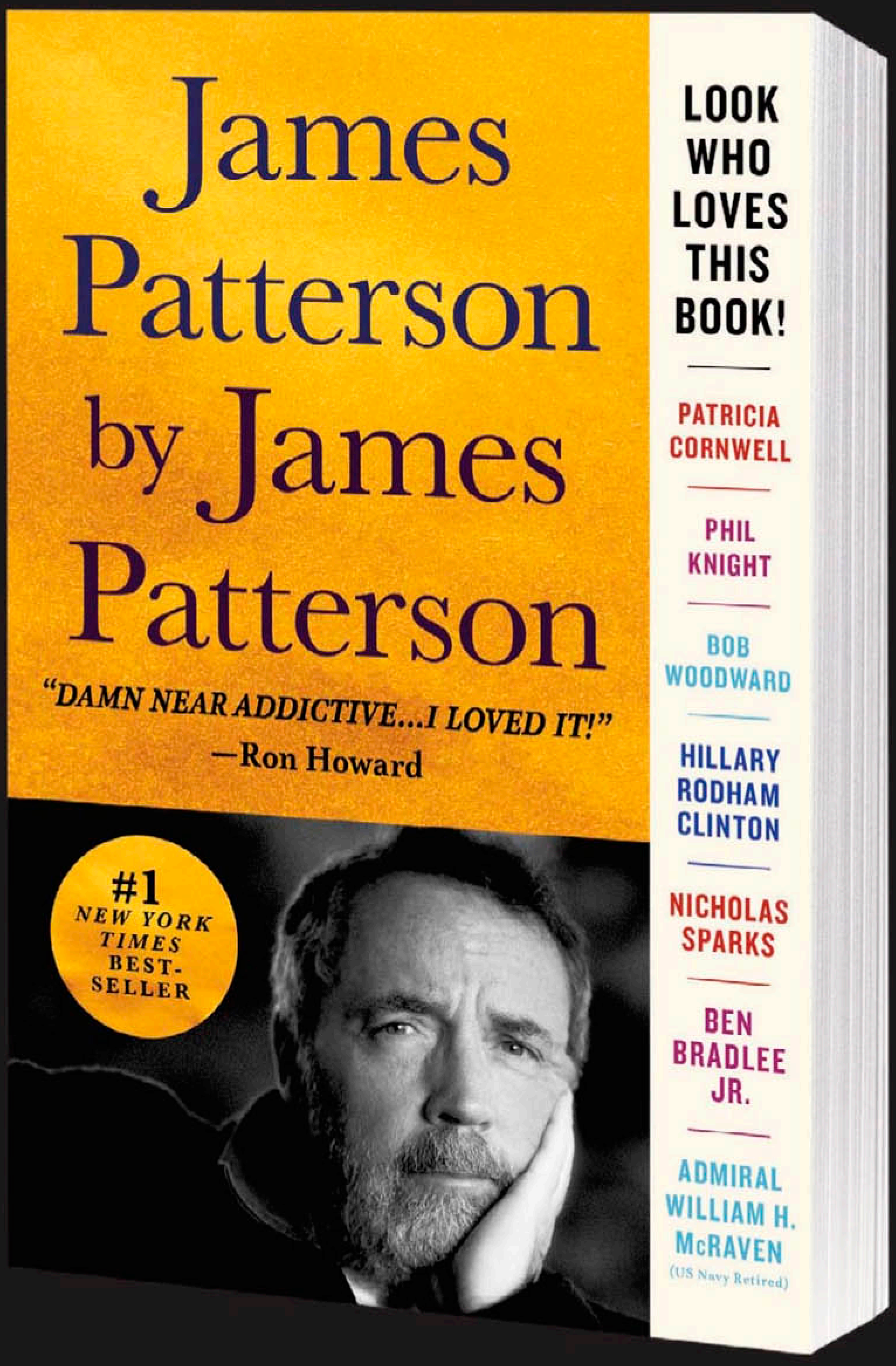
—HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

"A masterpiece of storytelling. Possibly the most entertaining book I've read in the past fifty years."

—ADMIRAL WILLIAM H. McRAVEN
Author of *Make Your Bed*

"Jim Patterson's life is a thriller in itself. His curiosity, incredible work ethic, and vulnerable humanity make this book a pure joy to read."

—STEPHEN A. SCHWARZMAN
CEO, The Blackstone Group

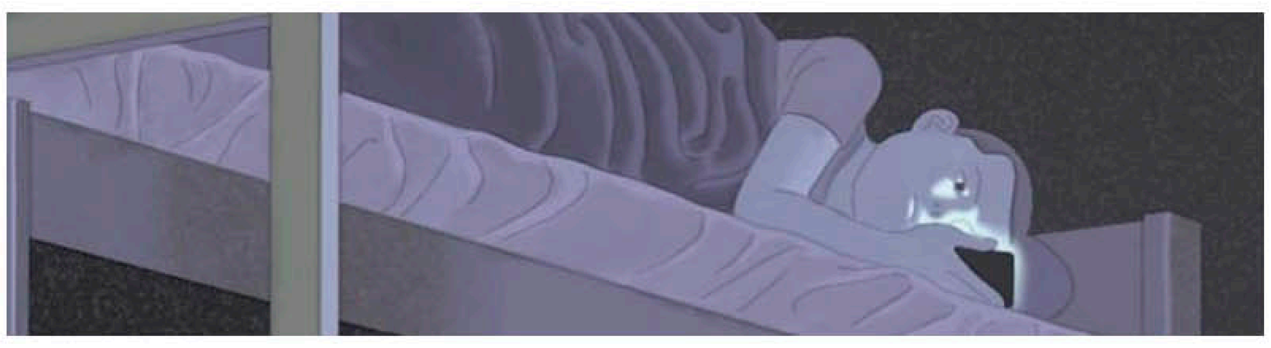


THE **#1** *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLER. **NOW IN PAPERBACK.**

GRAND CENTRAL

3 ASTRONOMY
With 62 newly discovered moons, Saturn takes the lead in the solar system.

7 WELL
Many adolescents don't get enough sleep. Experts offer ways to fix this.



8 METHODOLOGY
Developing and deploying high-tech eggs to help breed more condors.

ScienceTimes
The New York Times

To Victors, Severed Hands

Archaeologists have a new explanation for a grisly find in an ancient Egyptian temple.

By FRANZ LIDZ

Aristotle called the hand the "tool of tools"; Kant, "the visible part of the brain." The earliest works of art were handprints on the walls of caves. Throughout history hand gestures have symbolized the range of human experience: power, tenderness, creativity, conflict, even (bravo, Michelangelo) the touch of the divine. Without hands, civilization would be inconceivable.

And so the discovery in 2011 of the bones of a dozen right hands, at a site where the ancient Egyptian city of Avaris (today known as Tell el-Dab'a) once stood, was particularly unsettling. The remains were unearthed, most with palms down, from three shallow pits near the throne room of a royal palace. The hands, along with numerous disarticulated fingers, were most likely buried during Egypt's 15th dynasty, from 1640 B.C. to 1530 B.C. At the time, Egypt's eastern Nile Delta was controlled by a dynasty called the Hyksos, which means "rulers of foreign countries."

Although the Hyksos were described by the Ptolemaic Egyptian historian Manetho as "invaders of an obscure race" who conquered the region by force, recent research has shown that they descended from people who had immigrated peacefully over centuries from southwest Asia, now Israel and the Palestinian territories. Eventually, a few rose to power as the Hyksos, basing their power in Avaris.

The Hyksos are widely believed to have introduced the Egyptians to the horse and chariot, glass-working and all sorts of weaponry, including battle axes and composite bows. A recent study published in the journal Nature proposes that the Hyksos had a custom known as the Gold of Valor, which involved taking the hands of enemy combatants as war trophies.

The ritual seems to have become standard practice in Egypt, with soldiers returning from combat and presenting the dismembered right hands of defeated foes to their pharaoh or military commander.

"The amputations were a safe means to count slain enemies," said Manfred Bietak, an archaeologist at the Austrian Academy of Sciences who collaborated on the paper. "They also made the dead enemy incapable of raising his hand again against Egypt in the Netherworld."

Tomb inscriptions and temple reliefs describe the gruesome public ceremony, but the new study, conducted by a German and Austrian research team and drawn from an analysis of skeletal remains, offers the first physical evidence of it.

"Painstaking work was done on the surgical nature of the amputations," said Kara Cooney, a professor of Egyptian art and architecture at the University of California, Los Angeles. "Flesh and nails are still attached to the hands, providing more information for a carefully gathered collection of hands."

In 2011, the fragile appendages were hardened with an acetone-soluble glue so that they could be removed from the ground in a block of plaster cast. Poorly preserved, the hands could not be genetically sampled; Julia Gresky, a paleopathologist from the German Archaeological Institute in Berlin, determined their biological sex using a noninvasive measure that compares the length of the index finger with the length of the ring finger.

"The ring fingers of males tend to be longer than their index fingers," Dr. Gresky said. "The opposite is usually true for females."

Although some critics consider the tool simplistic and unreliable, Dr. Gresky is confident that at least 11 of the 12 hands were male. "Those 11 hands were large and robust," she said. "The 12th was much smaller and possibly female. I'm quite optimistic that a woman was attached."

Dr. Cooney notes that there are no records of women being soldiers in ancient

CONTINUED ON PAGE D4



JULIA GRESKY

Preserved, colored hands discovered in present-day Tell el-Dab'a, Egypt, in 2011.



ISABEL SELIGER

A DNA Quandary

Tiny bits of genetic material that humans leave everywhere can be collected and analyzed, raising ethical concerns about privacy and civil liberties.

By ELIZABETH ANNE BROWN

David Duffy, a wildlife geneticist at the University of Florida, just wanted a better way to track disease in sea turtles. Then he started finding human DNA everywhere he looked.

Over the past decade, wildlife researchers have refined techniques for recovering environmental DNA, or eDNA — trace amounts of genetic material that all living things leave behind.

A powerful and inexpensive tool for ecologists, eDNA is all over — floating in the air or lingering in water, snow, honey and even your cup of tea. Researchers have used the method to detect invasive species before they take over, to track vulnerable or secretive wildlife populations and even to rediscover species thought to be extinct. The eDNA technology is also used in wastewater surveillance systems to monitor Covid and other pathogens.

But all along, scientists using eDNA were quietly recovering gobs and gobs of human DNA. To them, it's pollution, a sort of human genomic bycatch muddying their data. But what if someone set out to collect human eDNA on purpose?

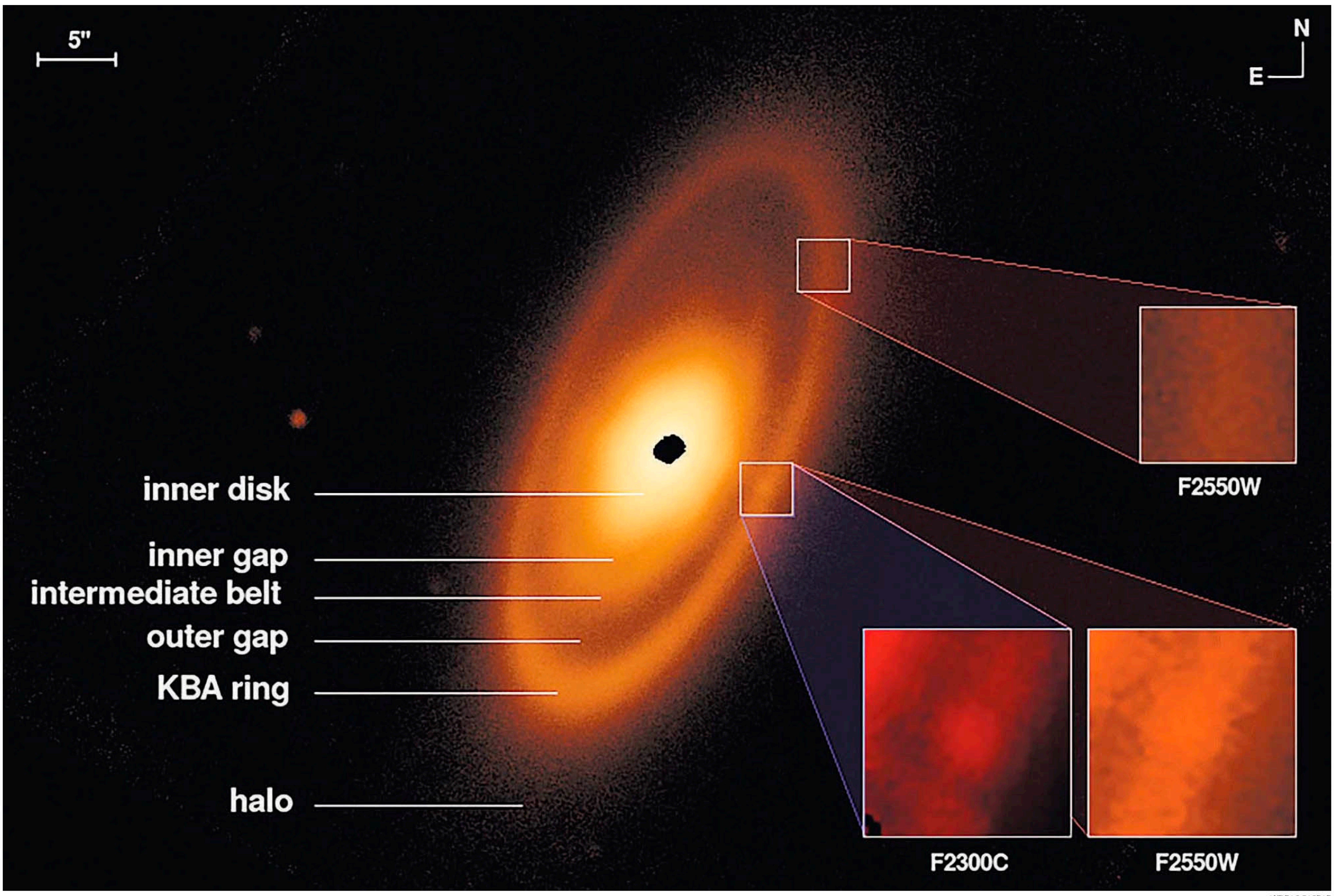
New DNA collecting techniques are "like catnip" for law enforcement officials, said Erin Murphy, a law professor at the New York University School of Law who specializes in the use of new technologies in the criminal legal system. The police have been quick to embrace unproven tools, like using DNA to create probability-based sketches of a suspect.

That could pose concerns regarding the preservation of privacy and civil liberties, especially as technological advancement allows more information to be gathered from ever smaller eDNA samples. Dr. Duffy and his colleagues used a readily available and affordable technology to see how much information they could glean from human DNA gathered from the environment in a

CONTINUED ON PAGE D5

Observatory

FINDINGS, EVENTS AND MORE



ANDRAS GASPAR

Around a Dazzling Star, Wreaths of Cosmic Chaos

The Webb telescope finds a new asteroid belt in the Fomalhaut star system.

By ROBIN GEORGE ANDREWS

Fomalhaut, a star just 25 light-years away, is so dazzlingly bright that it blots out the faint light of other stars around it. Stargazers have been enraptured by its secrets for thousands of years.

Now, with the help of the Webb Space Telescope, astronomers have documented evidence that Fomalhaut is a dynamic star wreathed in cosmic chaos. The observatory's infrared vision is letting astronomers better understand Fomalhaut's features, including a mysterious ring unlike anything found in our solar system.

"It's complex — there's so much going on!" said Andras Gaspar, an astronomer at the University of Arizona and one of the authors of a study using the Webb observations that was published in Nature Astronomy. "It's the first time we've seen such structures in an evolved system."

The findings could contribute to the solution to an existential puzzle: How weird, or ordinary, is our solar system? "It's hard to draw conclusions about if we're common or not, if our specific configuration is everywhere or nowhere," said Jessie Christiansen, the project scientist at NASA's Exoplanet Archive, who was not involved with the new study.

Fomalhaut dwells in the southern constellation Piscis Austrinus. The star is 440 million years old — young compared with our 4.6-billion-year-old sun. But Fomalhaut is a type of star that lives no more than a billion years. That means that, much like the sun, it is halfway through its expected stellar life.

Fortunately for the living things in our solar system, the sun shows no signs of a midlife crisis. Aside from the occasional asteroid or comet impact, most larger objects stick to their orbital lanes. Much of the cloud of debris that cloaks younger stars congealed eons ago into the eight discrete planets, with the main remaining fields of cosmic wreckage being the rocky asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter and the icy Kuiper belt beyond Neptune.

Fomalhaut offers a more reckless take on middle age, and a contrast with our orderly planetary system. But it was only recently that technology caught up with astronomical ambitions to understand the star's scattered surroundings.

For the new study, Dr. Gaspar and his team pointed Webb's Mid-Infrared Instrument at Fomalhaut. Unlike earlier space and ground telescopes, Webb can detect the faintest infrared glows emitted by dusty debris — and it revealed not one, but three nested rings of ruin around Fomalhaut.

The inner ring is analogous to our asteroid belt, while the outer ring is comparable to the sun's Kuiper belt. But Fomalhaut also has an intermediate debris highway between the two, most likely a mix of icy and rocky ephemera.

The solar system lacks this superstructure, "in part because we've got these big honking planets in the middle" — Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune — "that cleared stuff out," said Bruce Macintosh, the director of the University of California Observatories, who was not involved with the study. The gap between Fomalhaut's inner and intermediate rings may have been carved out by a planet. But no direct evidence of any worlds could be seen. By this point in Fomalhaut's life cycle, most planets would have cooled off, and only one many times the size of Jupiter would still be hot enough to be detected by the Webb's infrared instrument.

"You could hide Jupiters in there, all over the place, and nobody would know," Dr. Macintosh said.

The intermediate belt is also where exoplanet hunters once thought they had seen a world they named Fomalhaut b. But in 2020, Dr. Gaspar and his colleagues proposed that what other scientists had once thought was an intact exoplanet was actually an expanding cloud of debris created by an epic collision.

A problem with this idea was that this part of space looked vacant, so it seemed unlikely that two objects had managed to crash into each other. The team's discovery of the intermediate debris belt has now proffered a solution.

"We now know there's stuff there," Dr. Christiansen of the NASA archive said. "OK, so it's a collision — we can finally put that to bed."

Cataclysmic melees are not just transpiring close to the star. What looks like a vast maelstrom of dust within the outer belt may be the ghost of another gargantuan impact.

Astronomers are thrilled that the Webb telescope offers a front-row seat to this star's drama. It also makes them appreciate the comparatively tranquil nature of the solar system. Fomalhaut would be "chaotic as hell," Dr. Macintosh said, adding, "If there are planets there, they're getting smacked around by asteroids all the time."

Images of the Fomalhaut debris disk system show an asteroid belt and evidence of a complex planetary system. The lower insets enlarge the Great Dust Cloud, while the upper inset indicates Fomalhaut b's projected location.

Glimpse of a Planet Being Gobbled Up

A new discovery sheds light on the eventual fates of Earth and many other celestial bodies.

By BECKY FERREIRA

Astronomers have witnessed a star gobbling up a planet, offering the first direct glimpse of a gnarly process called planetary engulfment that most likely awaits Earth in the deep future.

Scientists serendipitously spotted a gas planet — like Jupiter but possibly larger — as it was swallowed up by an aging sunlike star about 12,000 light-years from Earth. Tantalizing hints of engulfment events have been spotted in the past, but nobody has ever caught a star in the act of devouring a planet until now.

The discovery "provides a missing link in our understanding of the evolution and final fates of planetary systems," including the one we inhabit, the astronomers wrote in their study, which was published in the journal Nature.

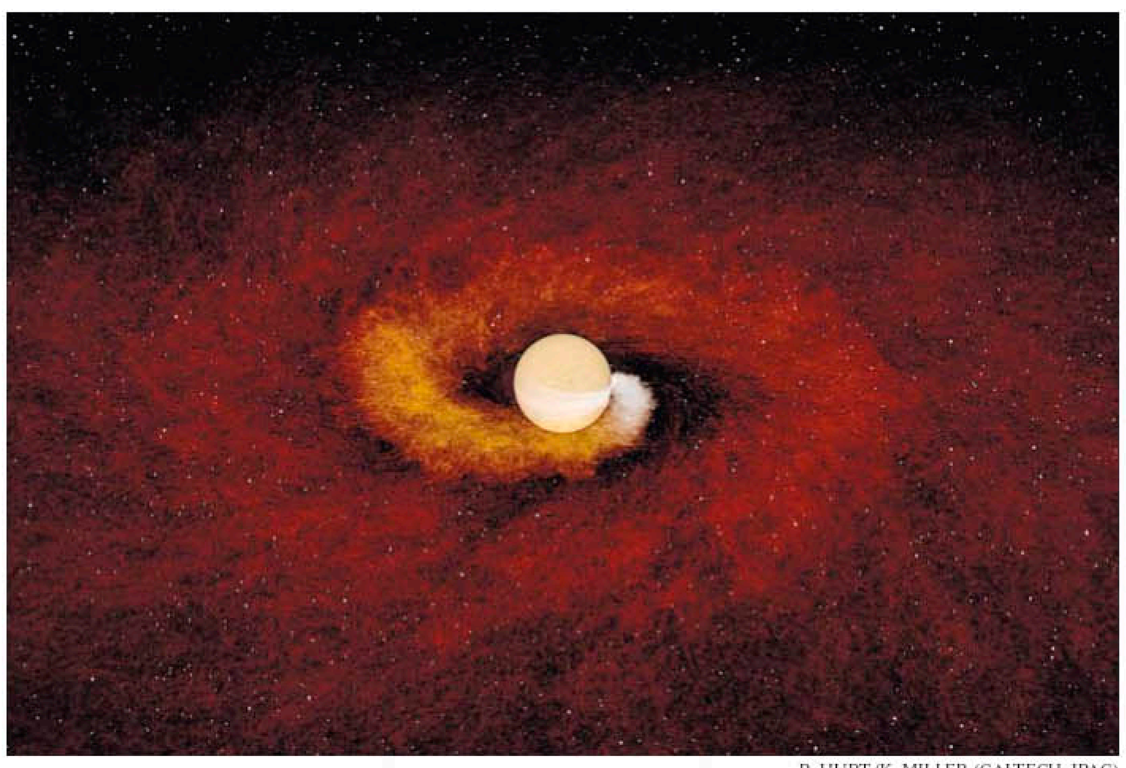
"This is the eventual fate of the Earth," said Kishalay De, a NASA Einstein fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and one of the study's authors. "We are really seeing what the Earth is going to run into five billion years from now."

The life cycles of stars are linked to their masses. Small stars, like red dwarfs, may shine for trillions of years, whereas the most massive stars explode just a few million years after their births. As stars like the sun start to die after billions of years, they transform into a class called red giants that expand hundreds of times in size, consuming anything within their advancing borders.

Signs of engulfment events are littered across the Milky Way. The light of some stars is polluted with the chemical signatures of planets, suggesting that whole worlds are being digested before our eyes. Scientists have also spotted many planets with small orbits that are doomed to fall within the radius of red giants in the future.

But while stars clearly consume the occasional planet, capturing this moment is challenging because the light sparked by these events is faint and ephemeral. In fact, Dr. De was using the Zwicky Transient Facility, a camera on a telescope at the Palomar Observatory in California, in May 2020 to look for something completely different — merging stars, called red novas. It was in those observations that he stumbled across a curious burst of visible light.

What unfolded was like a "detective story," Dr. De said. To identify the burst, his team obtained visible-light observations of the source captured in November 2020 by the W.M. Keck Observatory in Hawaii. Those images revealed a star chilling at about 5,000 degrees Fahrenheit, about 10 times colder than the searing temperatures expected from red novas.



R. HURT/K. MILLER (CALTECH, IPAC)

An artist's concept of the 10 billion-year-old star ZTF SLRN-2020 absorbing a gas giant planet as it spiraled into the star.

Puzzled, Dr. De and his colleagues observed the star again, this time in infrared light, using another camera at the Palomar Observatory and NASA's NEOWISE space telescope. The system turned out to be brilliant in infrared, a band of the light spectrum that is ideal for spotting faint objects that don't emit much energy. It dawned on the researchers that they were most likely watching a star gulping down a planet in real time.

"My first reaction was disbelief," Dr. De said. "We see the before and the after" of planetary engulfment, he added, but "these observations give us the first glimpse into how that process plays out."

The initial burst detected by the Zwicky observatory, which lasted 10 days, occurred at the moment that a dying star at last fully enveloped a gas planet no more than 10 times the mass of Jupiter. For more than a year before its luminous demise, the planet skimmed the outskirts of the star, pulling off chunks of its atmosphere, which explains why the researchers saw cool gas and dust hanging around the system. After the burst, the star eerily glowed for about six months as it swallowed the remains of the planet.

Lorenzo Spina, an astrophysicist at the Astronomical Observatory of Padua in Italy who studies planetary engulfment, called the team's conclusions "very solid" and described the discovery as "groundbreaking."

"This is a very important missing piece of the entire story," Dr. Spina said. "Now, we are going to have a more complete understanding of this entire process."

'It's too early to tell for sure if they're truly gone.'

P.J. Liesch, director of the Insect Diagnostic Lab at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, on the absence of sightings of invasive Northern giant hornets, also known as murder hornets, in the Pacific Northwest last year after they turned up in that region in 2020.

Saturn's Moons Knock Jupiter Off Its Pedestal

Newly discovered objects tip the satellite balance in the astronomical giants world.

By JONATHAN O'CALLAGHAN

In the red corner, Jupiter, the largest planet orbiting our sun, which shaped our solar system with its gravitational bulk.

In the blue corner, Saturn, the magnificent ringed world with bewildering hexagonal storms at its poles.

These two giant worlds are late in their bout for satellite-based supremacy. But now the fight over which planet has the most moons in its orbit has swung decisively in Saturn's favor.

This month, the International Astronomical Union is set to recognize 62 additional moons of Saturn based on a batch of objects discovered by astronomers. The small objects will give Saturn 145 moons — eclipsing Jupiter's total of 95.

"They both have many, many moons," said Scott Sheppard, an astronomer from the Carnegie Institution for Science in Washington. But Saturn "appears to have significantly more," he said, for reasons that are not entirely understood.

The newly discovered moons of Saturn are nothing like the bright object in Earth's night sky. They are irregularly shaped, like potatoes, and no more than one or two miles across. They orbit far from the planet too, between six million and 18 million miles, compared with larger moons, like Titan, that mostly orbit within a million miles of Saturn. Yet these small irregular moons are fascinating in their own right. They are mostly clumped together in groups, and they may be remnants of larger moons that shattered while orbiting Saturn.

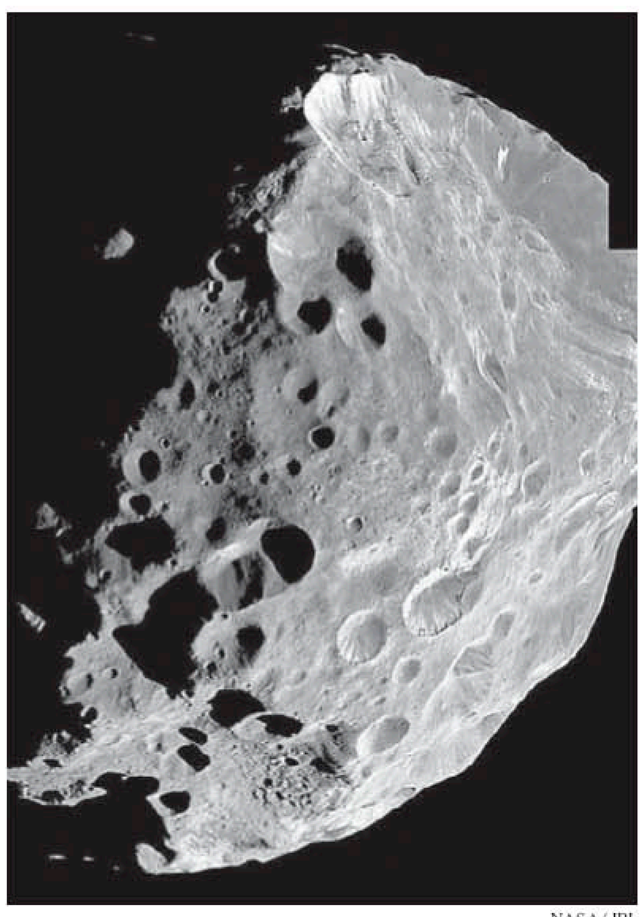
"These moons are pretty key to understanding some of the big questions about the solar system," said Bonnie Buratti of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California and the deputy project scientist on the upcoming Europa Clipper mission to Jupiter. "They have the fingerprints of events that took place in the early solar system."

The growing number of moons also highlights potential debates over what constitutes a moon.

"The simple definition of a moon is that it's an object that orbits a planet," Dr. Sheppard said. An object's size, for the moment, doesn't matter.

The new moons were discovered by two groups, one led by Dr. Sheppard and the other more recently by Edward Ashton of the Academia Sinica Institute of Astronomy and Astrophysics in Taiwan. Dr. Sheppard's group, in the mid-2000s, used the Subaru Telescope in Hawaii to hunt for more moons around Saturn.

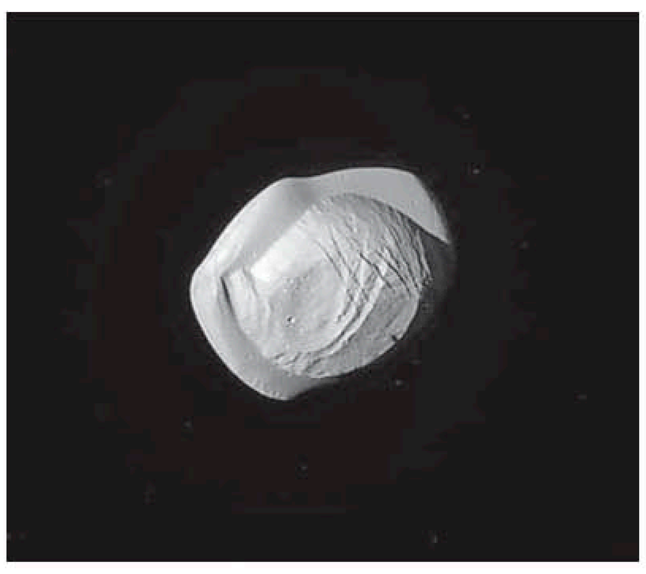




NASA/JPL



PHOTOGRAPHS BY NASA/JPL/SPACE SCIENCE INSTITUTE



The Saturn moon Pan, left, and shining above in the Encke Gap in the planet's A ring. Top left, the large Titan and the small Rhea, two more well-known moons of Saturn. Far left, a mosaic of images recorded of Phoebe, one of Saturn's larger irregular moons, which was visited by the Cassini spacecraft.

In March, Dr. Sheppard was also responsible for finding 12 new moons of Jupiter, which took it temporarily above Saturn in the scuffle to be the biggest hoarder of moons. That record was short-lived, it seems.

Dr. Ashton's group, from 2019 to 2021, used the Canada France Hawaii Telescope, a neighbor of the Subaru Telescope on Mauna Kea, to look for more of Saturn's moons and to verify some of Dr. Sheppard's discoveries. For a moon to be authenticated, it must be spotted multiple times to "be sure the observations are a satellite and not just an asteroid that happens to be near the planet," said Mike Alexandersen, who is responsible for officially confirming moons at the International Astronomical Union.

Most of Saturn's irregular moons orbit the planet in what astronomers call the Inuit, Norse and Gallic groups. Each group's objects may be the remains of larger moons, up to 150 miles across, that once orbited Saturn but were destroyed by impacts from asteroids or comets, or collisions between two moons. "It shows there's a big collision history around these planets," Dr. Sheppard said.

> **'It shows there's a big collision history around these planets.'**
> *SCOTT SHEPPARD*
> *CARNEGIE INSTITUTION FOR SCIENCE*

Those original moons may have been captured by Saturn "very early on in the solar system," Dr. Ashton said, perhaps in the first few hundred million years after its formation 4.5 billion years ago. Not all orbit in these groups, however, with a few rogue moons orbiting in a retrograde direction — that is, opposite to the orbits of the other moons.

"We don't know what's happening with those retrograde moons," Dr. Sheppard said. Dr. Ashton suspects they may be remnants of a more recent collision.

Learning more about the new moons is difficult owing to their small size and remote orbits. They appear to be a special class of object, different from asteroids that formed in the inner solar system and comets in the outer solar system. But not much more is known.

"These objects might be unique," Dr. Sheppard said. "They might be the last remnants of what formed in the giant planet region, likely very icy-rich objects."

NASA's Cassini spacecraft managed to observe about two dozen of the moons around Saturn up to its demise in 2017. While not close enough to study in detail, the data did allow scientists to "determine the rotation period" of some of the moons, the spin axis and "even the shape," said Tilmann Denk from the German Aerospace Center in Berlin, who led the observations. Cassini also found abundant ice on the surface of one of the larger irregular moons, Phoebe.

Closer observations of Saturn's tiny moons could give scientists a window into a tumultuous time in the early solar system. During that period, collisions were more common and the planets jostled for position, with Jupiter thought to have migrated from nearer the sun farther out to its current orbit. "That gives you additional information on the formation of the solar system," Dr. Denk said.

Yet the irregular moons we are seeing so far may only be the beginning. "We estimated that there are potentially thousands," around Saturn and Jupiter, Dr. Ashton said. Uranus and Neptune, too, may have many such irregular moons, but their vast distance from the sun makes them difficult to discover.

Saturn, despite being smaller than Jupiter, appears to have many more irregular moons. It may have three times as many as Jupiter, down to about two miles in size. The reason is unclear, Dr. Ashton said.

Jupiter's original moons may have tended to be larger, and less likely to shatter. Or Saturn may have captured more objects into its orbit than Jupiter. Or Saturn's moons may have been on orbits that were more likely to overlap and collide, producing smaller, irregular moons.

Whatever the reason, the outcome is clear. Jupiter is on the ropes, and it is unlikely to recover its title as the planet with the most moons. As astronomers' capabilities to find smaller and smaller satellites improve, "Saturn will win by miles," Dr. Alexandersen said. "I don't think it's a contest any more."

Pershing Square Foundation

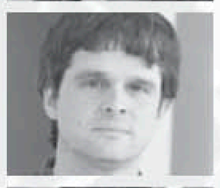
Changing the paradigm of brain research

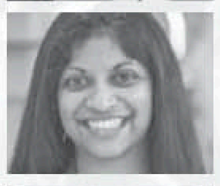
The **Maximizing Innovation in Neuroscience Discovery (MIND) Prize** empowers scientists to rethink conventional approaches and fuels the groundbreaking research that will accelerate our understanding of neurodegenerative diseases at every level and will revolutionize our ability to predict, prevent, and treat them.

Congratulations to the winners of the inaugural 2023 MIND Prize


Matthew Greenblatt, MD, PhD
Weill Cornell Medicine

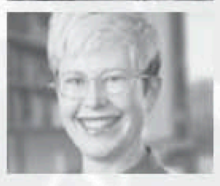

Justus Kebschull, PhD
Johns Hopkins University


Evan Macosko, MD, PhD
Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard


Priya Rajasethupathy, MD, PhD
The Rockefeller University


Deblina Sarkar, PhD
Massachusetts Institute of Technology


Sergey Stavisky, PhD
University of California, Davis


Jessica Tollkuhn, PhD
Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

We celebrate their pioneering work towards cognitive health.

The Pershing Square Foundation strives to radically change and accelerate neuroscience research by creating a community of next-frontier thinkers who can uncover a deeper understanding of the brain and cognition. The MIND Prize brings together the most talented early-to-mid-career investigators across scientific fields with creative and experimental ideas in the USA and catalyzes interdisciplinary approaches and collaborations to solve problems that will transform the current understanding of the brain and its impact on human health.

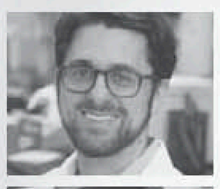
To learn more about our mission and program, please visit: www.MINDPrize.org.

PERSHING SQUARE SOHN CANCER RESEARCH ALLIANCE

Investing in talent for the future

The tenth annual Pershing Square Sohn Prize for Young Investigators in Cancer Research supports New York tri-state area, early career research scientists and promotes collaboration between science and business to accelerate cures for cancer.

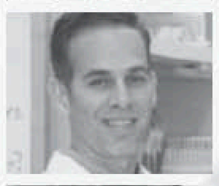
Meet the 2023 Pershing Square Sohn Cancer Research Prize winners

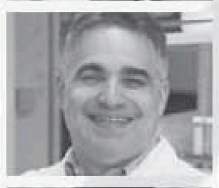

Gilad Evrony, MD, PhD
NYU Grossman School of Medicine


Benjamin Izar, MD, PhD
Columbia University Irving Medical Center


Marta Luksza, PhD
The Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai


John Maciejowski, PhD
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center


Kyle K. Payne, PhD
Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey


David Simon, PhD
Weill Cornell Medicine

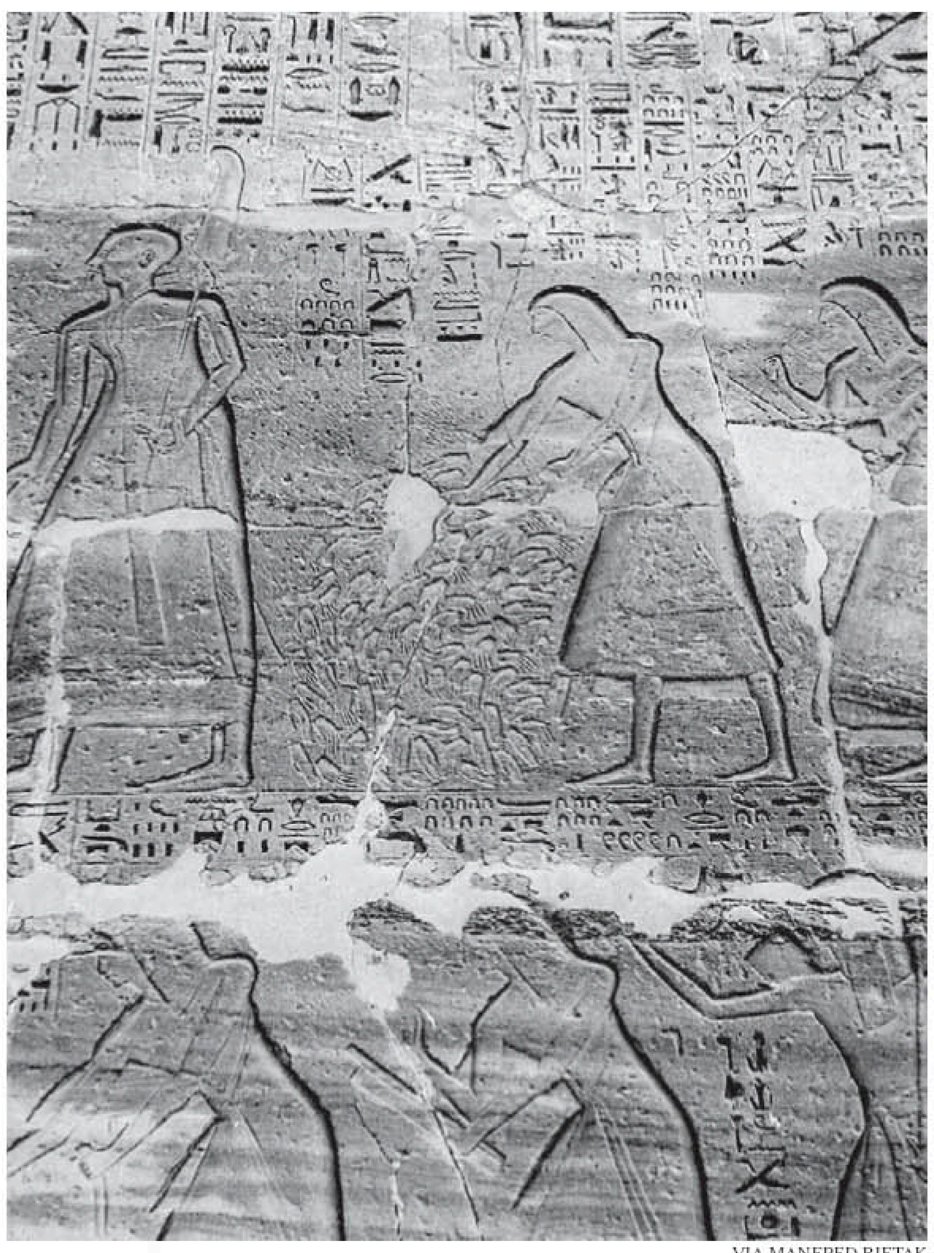

Xiaolei Su, PhD
Yale School of Medicine

We salute their outstanding contributions to cancer research.

The Pershing Square Sohn Cancer Research Alliance is dedicated to playing a catalytic role to accelerate cures for cancer. The Alliance enables the pursuit of the most innovative and advanced cancer research by supporting early career scientists. It also facilitates collaboration among scientific, business, and philanthropic communities.

To learn more about our mission, program, and award recipients, please visit: **www.psscra.org.**

Photos by Melanie Einzig / Pershing Square Sohn Cancer Research Alliance



VIA MANFRED BIETAK



JULIA GRESKY

Left, a relief showed the piling up of severed hands after a battle against the Libyans by Ramses III from his Temple at Medinet Habu in Egypt. Right, an overview of the 11 right hands in two pits in Hyksos Period Tell el-Dab'a.

Severed Hands Were Spoils of War

CONTINUED FROM PAGE D1

Egypt. "This was a male sphere of action," she said. However, Egyptian texts from the reign of Rameses III, from about 1186 B.C. to 1155 B.C., indicate that there were women in the Libyan Army.

All of the bones dug up in Avaris were fully formed but showed no signs of age-related degeneration, suggesting that the hands had belonged to individuals roughly between the ages of 14 and 30. Some Egyptologists had theorized that the dismemberment was a barbaric punishment for criminals, but Dr. Gresky said the location, level of care and perhaps the positioning of the severed hands argued for war trophies.

Salima Ikram, an Egyptologist at the American University in Cairo who was not involved in the project, said that the new analysis "raises interesting questions about the origins of traditions showing dominance over enemies, not only in Egypt, but throughout the ancient world."

'Fish in Baskets'

The ancient Egyptians are venerated for their achievements in art, architecture and technology. But their brutal tradition of maiming criminals and adversaries predates the Hyksos by more than a millennium. Perjurers were sometimes disciplined by slicing off their ears and noses; insurgents, by impaling the bodies at the ribs until death. The Narmer Palette, a ceremonial engraving that dates to the time of the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt about 5,000 years ago, shows the beheading and mutilation of what were apparently rival chieftains.

On one side of the palette, King Narmer holds a mace aloft in his right hand while with his left he yanks a kneeling captive by the hair. "The smiting motif would have been a public display of King Narmer's power over his enemy, smashing the skull to bloody bits," Dr. Cooney said.

On the reverse side, the king inspects rows of bound, decapitated corpses with their heads between their legs, and their castrated penises atop their heads. "Dismemberment was anathema to the ancient Egyptians, who wanted their bodies whole for a materialized afterlife existence," Dr. Cooney said.

A relief in the mortuary temple of Rameses III, at Medinet Habu, shows the pharaoh standing on a balcony after a victory not far from heaps of his enemies' severed phalluses (12,312, according to one translation of zealous army scribes) and hands (24,625). In the temple of Amun at Karnak, a chronicle of a 13th century B.C. battle details prisoners being brought back to the pharaoh Merneptah with "donkeys before them, laden with uncircumcised penises of the Land of Libya, with the hands of [every] foreign land that was with them, as fish in baskets." If the tally of fatalities is to be believed, the Egyptians collected the penises of 6,359 uncircumcised enemy dead and the hands of 2,362 circumcised enemies. "The stink must have been awful, and thus the 'fish in baskets' comment," Dr. Cooney said.

The Wrong Hand

Except for especially heinous offenses such as robbing the tombs of pharaohs, the severing of hands was a rare punishment in ancient Egypt, which is why Dr. Bietak said it was unlikely that the hands found in Avaris were from criminals. But such severings were a relatively common theme in military scenes of the New Kingdom, which began in the 16th century B.C. and lasted for nearly 500 years.

Accounting for slain enemies and assuring safety in the afterlife.

Dr. Bietak, who has led excavations at Tell el-Dab'a since 1966, said that the Egyptians appear to have adopted the custom some 50 to 80 years earlier than the inscriptional and pictorial evidence. A relief in the temple of Ahmose I in Abydos features a pile of detached hands on the battlefield. Ahmose I was the king who conquered Avaris and defeated the Hyksos.

Were the Avaris hands severed from living victims or from the recently deceased? "When placed in the pits, the hands must have been soft and pliable enough to be stretched into a presentable position," Dr. Gresky said. "This implies they were put there before rigor mortis set in or after it had passed." Probably after, she said; the hands would have been collected and stored for some time before they were put in the pit. "If before," Dr. Gresky said, "then the amputations took place just prior to or even during the offering ceremony."

Dr. Gresky said the more likely scenario was that the hands were cut off roughly one to four days after death. She noted that the pits would have been visible from the palace throne room, indicating a public ceremony and buttressing the notion that the hands were spoils of war.

So why cut off the right hand? "The right is generally the dominant hand for activity — for writing, working and fighting," Dr. Cooney said. "Removing it from a living person is a method of imposing violent control and potentially leaving the living victim of such excision alive for all to see, a walking advertisement not to cross the powers-that-be."

In the tomb of an army officer named Ahmose, son of Ibana, a narrative describes how after each skirmish with the Hyksos at Avaris and Sharuhen, he reported his new haul of enemy hands to the pharaoh, who rewarded him with the Gold of Valor. Dr. Bietak speculates that the showy regalia involved necklaces of golden beads and pendants in the shape of flies.

"Flies are in the thick of battle, they never give up, and keep returning to the fray, just as good soldiers should," Dr. Ikram said. "Thus, comparing a warrior to a fly was a high compliment."

Scientists Map a More Diverse Human Genome

The new 'pangenome' could greatly expand the reach of personalized medicine.

By ELIE DOLGIN

More than 20 years after scientists first released a draft sequence of the human genome, the book of life has been given a long-overdue rewrite.

A more accurate and inclusive edition of our genetic code was published last week, marking a major step toward a deeper understanding of human biology and personalized medicine for people from a wide range of racial and ethnic backgrounds.

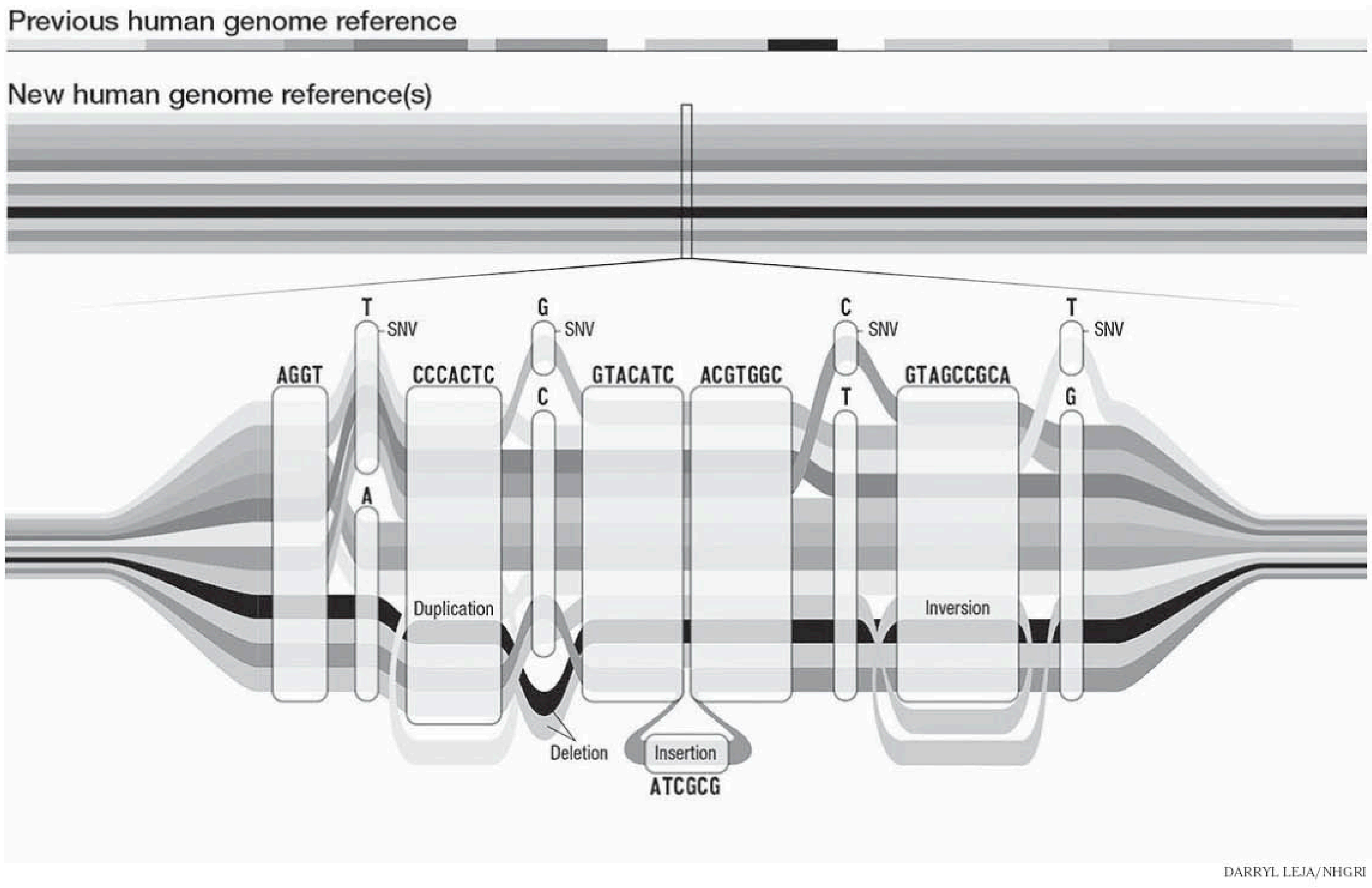
Unlike the previous reference — which was largely based on the DNA of one mixed-race man from Buffalo, with inputs from a few dozen other individuals, mostly of European descent — the new "pangenome" incorporates near-complete genetic sequences from 47 men and women of diverse origins, including African Americans, Caribbean Islanders, East Asians, West Africans and South Americans.

The revamped genome map represents a crucial tool for scientists and clinicians hoping to identify genetic variations associated with disease. It also promises to deliver treatments that can benefit all people, regardless of their race, ethnicity or ancestry, researchers said.

"It's been long needed — and they've done a very good job," said Ewan Birney, a geneticist and deputy director general of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory, who was not involved in the effort. "This will improve our fine-grained understanding of variation, and then that research will open new opportunities toward clinical applications."

Powered by the latest in DNA sequencing technology, the pangenome collates all 47 unique genomes into a single resource, providing the most detailed picture yet of the code that powers our cells. Gaps in the earlier reference are now filled, with nearly 120 million previously missing DNA letters added to the three-billion-letter-long code.

Gone is the idea of a totemic strand of DNA that extends six feet when uncoiled and stretched out in a straight line. Now, the rebooted reference resembles a corn maze, with alternative paths and side trails that allow scientists to explore a broader range of the genetic diversity found in people the world over.



DARRYL LEJA/NHGRI

The pangenome unveiled last week resembles a corn maze, with alternative paths and side trails that allow scientists to explore a broader range of the genetic diversity found in people the world over.

Dr. Eric Green, director of the National Human Genome Research Institute, the government agency that funded the work, likens the pangenome to a new kind of bodywork manual for automotive repair shops. Whereas before, every mechanic had the design specs for only one kind of car, now there is a master plan that covers different makes and models.

"We've gone from having one really nice blueprint of the Chevy to now having blueprints of 47 representative cars from each of 47 different manufacturers," he said.

Knowing what to do with this Kelley Blue Book of genomics will involve a steep learning curve. New analytical tools are needed. Coordinate systems must be redefined. Widespread adoption will take time.

"Making this easy to be used by the community is work to be done," said Heidi Rehm, chief genomics officer at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, who was not involved in the project.

But in due course, experts said, the pangenome will revolutionize the field of genomic medicine.

"We're going to have the benefit of actually understanding ourselves as a species much, much better," said Evan Eichler, a genome scientist at the University of Washington. Dr. Eichler was among more than 100 scientists and bioethicists who described the new pangenome reference in the journal Nature.

The architects of the project are continuing to add more population groups, with the goal of including at least 350 high-quality genomes that encompass the bulk of global human diversity.

Offering the most detailed picture yet of the code that powers our cells.

"We want to represent all the branches of the human tree," said Ira Hall, a geneticist who leads the Yale Center for Genomic Health.

Some of the new genomes will come from New Yorkers who previously participated in a research program at the Mount Sinai Health System. If their preliminary DNA data seems to reflect certain underrepresented genetic backgrounds, those individuals will be invited to participate in the pangenome project.

Some gaps might never get plugged in the publicly available reference, though — by design.

Previous attempts to capture human genetic diversity often extracted sequence data from marginalized populations without regard for their needs and preferences. Informed by those ethical missteps, pangenome coordinators are now collaborating with Indigenous groups to develop formal policies around data ownership.

"We are still grappling with the issue of native and tribal sovereignty," said Barbara Koenig, a bioethicist at the University of California, San Francisco, who was involved in the project.

In Australia, researchers are incorporating DNA sequences from various Aboriginal peoples into a similar depository that will be combined with the open-source pangenome, but then kept behind a firewall. According to Hardip Patel of Australia's National Centre for Indigenous Genomics in Canberra, the scientists next plan to consult with community leaders about if or how to make the data accessible through request.

Some Indigenous advocates want to see the pangenome project go further. Keolu Fox, a genomics scientist at the University of California, San Diego, who is Native Hawaiian, has suggested training the next generation of Indigenous scientists to have greater agency over the genomic data.

"It's finally time that we decentralize power and control and redistribute that among the communities themselves," Dr. Fox said.

4_97542216

Telescopes Capture A Singular Cosmic Blast

A massive black hole has been consuming a gigantic cloud of gas for three years.

By DENNIS OVERBYE

It's a dog-eat-dog cosmos. On May 3, astronomers reported observing a star that was in the process of swallowing one of its own planets. Just two days earlier, another team had described black holes that were ripping stars apart and consuming them in a process known as tidal disruption event, or T.D.E.

Now an international group of astronomers reports that it is observing one of the most violent and energetic acts of cosmic cannibalism ever witnessed, perhaps the biggest explosion seen yet in the history of the universe. Eight billion light-years from Earth, in the darkness beyond the constellation Vulpecula, a black hole perhaps a billion times as massive as the sun seems to be gorging on a humongous cloud of gas. A study of the phenomenon appeared Friday in Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society.

The study began on April 13, 2021, when the Zwicky Transient Facility, a small telescope that was busy looking for exploding stars, or supernovas, spotted a bright flash that did not fit expectations. Most supernovas fade after a few weeks; this one, known as AT2021lwx, kept going — and has continued to explode for three years now.

In fact, the explosion turned out to have been first detected a year earlier by the Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System, or ATLAS, a network of robotic telescopes in Hawaii, South Africa and Chile. That was the actual start of the cataclysm; as it proceeded, a worldwide network of telescopes and satellites has monitored it, measuring its emanations across the electromagnetic spectrum, from high-energy X-rays down to the infrared.

"Most supernovae and tidal disruption events only last for a couple of months before fading away," said Philip Wiseman, an astrophysicist at the University of Southampton and the lead author of the new paper. "For something to be bright for two-plus years was immediately very unusual."



JOHN A. PAICE

An artist's conception of a black hole accretion. Black holes feast on gas and dust pulled into their gravitational field. Scientists have been monitoring one that began exploding three years ago.

What was going on? "At first we thought this flare-up could be the result of a black hole consuming a passing star," said Matt Nicholl of Queen's University Belfast, who helped analyze the ongoing explosion. "But our models showed that the black hole would have to have swallowed up to 15 times the mass of our sun to stay this bright for this long."

Another idea was that it was an outburst from a quasar — energy squirting from the edge of a supermassive black hole at the heart of a galaxy. But there was no record of previous quasar activity at the location, nor was there any visible sign of a galaxy there.

Of the many unlikely explanations, the most likely, Dr. Wiseman and his colleagues concluded, was that a black hole as massive as a billion suns was enjoying a prolonged feast on a gigantic cloud of gas. They have encouraged colleagues to be on the lookout for similar events.

"AT2021lwx is an extraordinary event that does not fit into any common class of transient," Dr. Wiseman said in an email. He added that, with a total radiated energy equal to 100 supernovas, "it is one of the most luminous transients ever discovered."

Jolt for jolt, that would put it in the company of colliding black holes. "Black holes colliding release energy in gravitational waves at an extreme luminosity — 10 billion times more 'powerful' than this explosion," Dr. Wiseman wrote. "But that power only lasts for 20 milliseconds," adding that this explosion has lasted years.

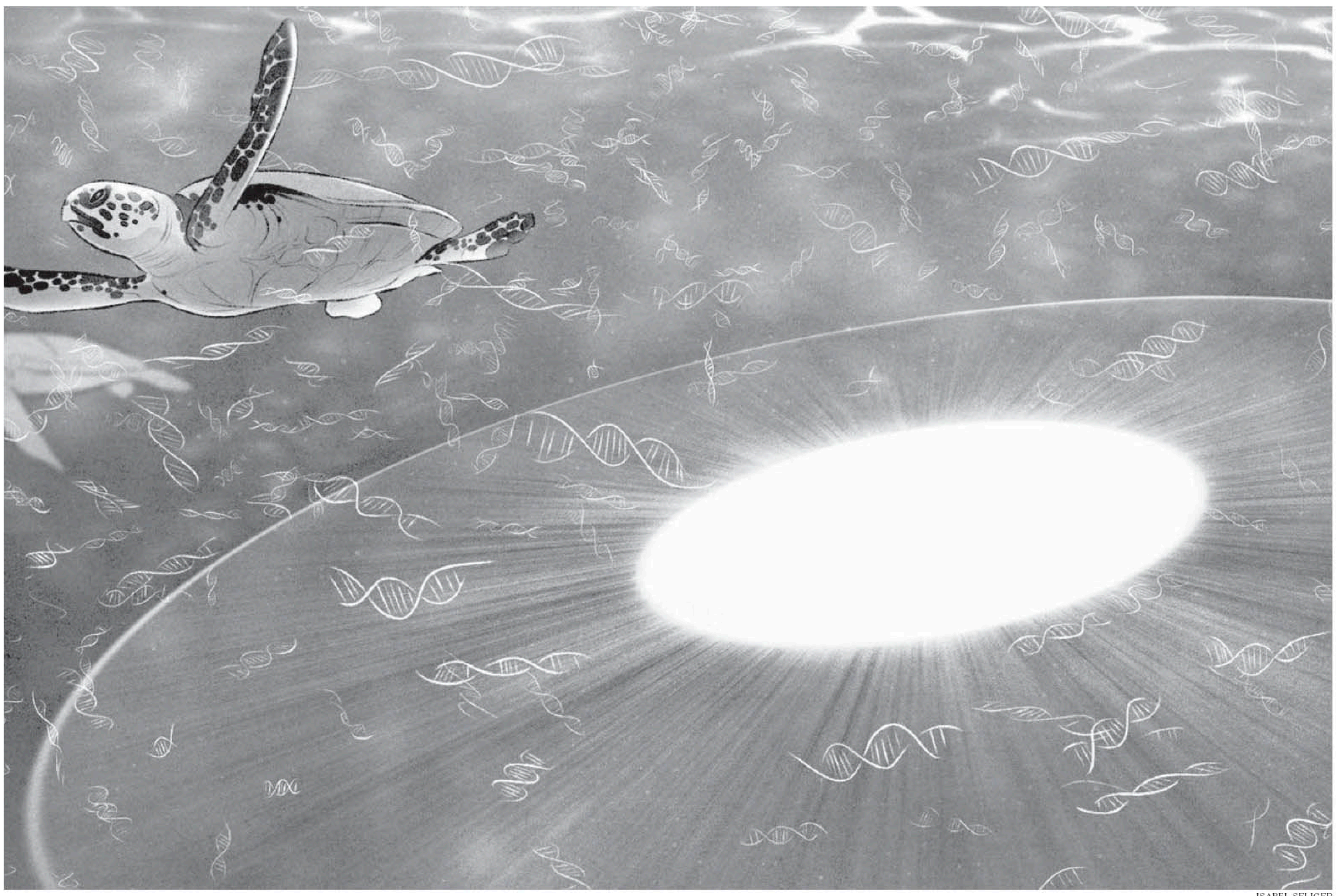
DNA Quandary: New Technology Fuels Privacy Concerns

CONTINUED FROM PAGE D1

variety of circumstances, such as from outdoor waterways and the air inside a building.

The results of their research, published on Monday in the journal Nature Ecology & Evolution, demonstrate that scientists can recover medical and ancestry information from minute fragments of human DNA lingering in the environment.

Forensic ethicists and legal scholars say the Florida team's findings increase the urgency for comprehensive genetic privacy regulations. For researchers, it also highlights an imbalance in rules around such techniques in the United States — that it's easier for law enforcement officials to deploy a half-baked new technology than it is for scientific researchers to get approval for studies to confirm that the system even works.



ISABEL SELIGER

Genetic Trash to Genetic Treasure

It has been clear for decades that fragments of our DNA cover the planet like litter. It just didn't seem to matter. Scientists believed DNA in the environment was too small and too degraded to be meaningfully recovered, much less used to identify an individual human being, unless it came from distinct samples like a bloodstain or an object someone had touched.

Wildlife researchers embraced environmental DNA anyway because they're only looking for very small segments of DNA — scanning for what they call bar codes that will identify the creatures in a sample to a species level.

But after finding "surprising" levels of human eDNA in their samples while monitoring disease in Florida sea turtles, Dr. Duffy and his team set out to get a more accurate picture of the condition of human DNA in the environment, and to see how much information it could reveal about people in an area.

As a proof of concept, the researchers scooped up a soda-can-size sample of water from a creek in St. Augustine, Fla. They then fed the genetic material from the sample through a $1,000 nanopore sequencer that is the size of a cigarette lighter and plugs into a laptop, allowing researchers to read longer stretches of DNA.

From the samples, the team recovered much more legible human DNA than they had anticipated. And as knowledge expands about human genetics, analysis of even limited samples can reveal a wealth of information.

The researchers recovered enough mitochondrial DNA — passed directly from mother to child for thousands of generations — to generate a snapshot of the genetic ancestry of the population around the creek, which roughly aligns with the racial makeup reported in the latest census data for the area (although the researchers note that racial identity is a poor proxy for genetic ancestry). One mitochondrial sample was even complete enough to meet the requirements for the federal missing persons database.

They also found key mutations shown to carry a higher risk of diabetes, cardiac issues or several eye diseases. According to their data, someone whose genetic material turned up in the sample had a mutation that could lead to a rare disease that causes progressive neurological impairment and is often fatal. The illness is hereditary and may not emerge until a patient's 40s. Dr. Duffy couldn't help wondering: Does that person know? Does the person's family? Does the person's insurance company?

Surveillance and Forensics

Anna Lewis, a Harvard researcher who studies the ethical, legal and social implications of genetics research, said that environmental DNA hadn't been widely discussed by experts in bioethics. But after the findings from Dr. Duffy and his colleagues, it will be.

Technology focused on eDNA, she said, could be used for surveillance of certain kinds of people — for example, people with a specific ancestral background or with particular medical conditions or disabilities.

The implications of such uses, researchers agree, depend on who is using the technology and why. While pooled eDNA samples could help public health researchers determine the incidence of a mutation that causes a disease in a community, that same eDNA sample could equally be used to find and persecute ethnic minorities.

"This gives a powerful new tool to authorities," Dr. Lewis said. "There's internationally plenty of reason, I think, to be concerned." Countries like China already conduct extensive and explicit genetic tracking of minority populations, including Tibetans and Uighurs. Tools like eDNA analysis could make it that much easier, she said.

How much of an ethical minefield eDNA research will be also depends on the extent to which it's possible to identify an individual. In some situations, it's already achievable.

The kind of genetic data Dr. Duffy recovered from public places wouldn't work with the methods law enforcement personnel in the United States currently use to identify individuals, said Robert O'Brien, a forensic biologist at Florida International University and a former crime laboratory DNA analyst.

When law enforcement DNA analysts compare a crime scene sample with a suspect, they're looking at 20 markers spread across the human genome that are tracked by the F.B.I.'s Combined DNA Index System, or CODIS, Mr. O'Brien said. Those markers are only useful if there's certainty that several of them come from the same person, and because the eDNA fragments Dr. Duffy studied can't capture more than one marker at a time, a public place like the Florida stream becomes a nightmarish jigsaw puzzle.

However, forensic researchers suggest that individual identification from eDNA could already be possible in enclosed spaces where fewer people have been. Last October, a team from the Oslo University Hospital's forensic research center piloted a new technique to recover human DNA from air samples and was able to construct full CODIS profiles from airborne DNA inside an office.

That highlights the possibility that law enforcement officials could use eDNA collected at crime scenes to incriminate people, even though wildlife ecologists who developed the techniques say the science isn't mature enough for such purposes. Scientists have yet to pin down the fundamentals of eDNA, like how it travels through air or water or how it degrades over time. And nanopore sequencing — the technology that allowed Dr. Duffy's team to find longer and more informative DNA fragments — still has a much higher error rate than older technologies, meaning an unusual genetic signature that seems like a promising lead could be a red herring.

Rules for a New Technology

In the United States, rules vary widely for who is allowed to capture and analyze DNA.

University scientists hoping to learn more about human eDNA must justify the scope and privacy concerns of their studies in an imperfect process involving ethics boards at their institutions that can limit or reject experiments. But there are no such guardrails for law enforcement officials trying out a new technology.

'This gives a powerful new tool to authorities. There's internationally plenty of reason, I think, to be concerned.'

ANNA LEWIS
HARVARD RESEARCHER, ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL DNA

"There's an imbalance in almost all systems of the world between what law enforcement is allowed to do, versus publicly funded research, versus private companies," said Barbara Prainsack, a professor at the University of Vienna who studies the regulation of DNA technology in medicine and forensics.

While some countries, like Germany, have an approved green list of technologies and forms of evidence that law enforcement agencies can use, it's exactly the reverse in the United States.

"It's a total Wild West, a free for all," said Ms. Murphy, the N.Y.U. law professor. "The understanding is police can sort of do whatever they want unless it's explicitly prohibited."

Often, the public and other branches of government learn that law enforcement officials have adopted a new technique only at a news conference announcing an arrest, Ms. Murphy said. She pointed specifically to the arrest of Joseph James DeAngelo, known as the Golden State Killer, which the police credited to the use of genetic genealogy — entering crime scene DNA into family history databases and triangulating a criminal's identity based on distant cousins. In those high-profile cases, she said, law enforcement personnel rely "on the good will they engender when they do use the technology for really positive uses." Other uses might not be disclosed.

Safeguards against misusing a new technology like eDNA rely on the courts, where experts say the track record is poor.

To keep immature or bunk science out of legal deliberations, trial judges are supposed to determine whether an expert's scientific testimony "rests on a reliable foundation." Ms. Murphy said it was unreasonable to expect every trial judge to keep abreast of the latest scientific advancements. The rules of evidence, she added, "favor the admission of evidence and expect the jury to sort out what to believe and what not to believe."

For decades, organizations like the Innocence Project have worked to weed pseudoscience out of courts — microscopic hair analysis, blood spatter analysis and bite mark evidence have all been used to wrongly convict defendants. Even in the face of overwhelming evidence that those technologies aren't reliable, "courts are still reluctant not to allow it or to overturn a case" based on such lines of evidence because of the long precedent of their use, said Aliza Kaplan, a professor at Lewis & Clark Law School in Portland, Ore., and counsel to the Forensic Justice Project.

The Fourth Amendment's prohibition of "unreasonable search and seizure" without probable cause is also supposed to prevent the erosion of privacy by a powerful new technology. However, since the early 2000s, many prosecutors and courts have taken the stance that any DNA not still attached to a person has been abandoned, meaning that the police don't need a warrant to collect it.

But it may be almost impossible to avoid leaving DNA in public. Dr. Duffy and his colleagues found that they could successfully collect airborne human DNA even from people wearing gloves and surgical masks and gowns.

"That really belies the idea that we are in any way voluntarily shedding our genetic material," said Vera Eidelman, a staff attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union who focuses on constitutional claims regarding genetic privacy and who was not involved in the Florida team's study.

Consent and Genetic Exceptionalism

It's possible to compare human eDNA sampling to other surveillance technologies members of the public don't individually consent to, like facial recognition cameras. But experts say there's an important distinction.

When it comes to collecting DNA, individuals aren't the only ones affected. It also implicates "family members and, in some contexts, communities," said Sandra Soo-Jin Lee, a biomedical ethicist at Columbia University.

"DNA tracks to your extended relatives, tracks forward in time to your children, tracks backward in time to your ancestors," Ms. Murphy added. "In the future, who knows what DNA will tell us about people or how it might be used?"

There's a wide market for genetic information — from pharmaceutical companies developing therapeutics, to insurance actuaries, to public health researchers. But protections for the public are stymied by the lack of workable legal definitions of what DNA actually is. Is it personal property, Ms. Murphy asks? Is it data? Is it always medical information? Who owns it once it has been collected?

Bioethicists and civil liberties experts say that Dr. Duffy's warning provides decision makers a rare chance to discuss the ethics and the legality of a new genetic technique before it enters widespread use. Usually, they're playing catch-up — but thanks to wildlife ecologists, now they have a modest head start.

Well



GETTY IMAGES

Mini Contraceptive Pill: Explaining a Proposal

This option for birth control may be available without a prescription.

By ALISHA HARIDASANI GUPTA

Food and Drug Administration advisers concluded that the benefits outweighed the risks of making available a hormonal contraceptive pill — sold under the brand name Opill and produced by the French company HRA Pharma — without a prescription.

If the F.D.A. follows the nonbinding recommendation of its advisers — and there is a chance the agency might not — Opill would become the first birth control pill to be available over the counter since oral contraceptives were introduced in the United States in 1960. A final decision is expected by early August.

After a two-day meeting, the 17 members of the F.D.A. committee voted unanimously that it would be safe to make Opill available without a prescription, a move also overwhelmingly supported by medical associations, including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Medical Association. A 2022 survey found that 77 percent of more than 5,000 female participants favored the idea of getting the birth control pill over the counter, with many saying it would be more convenient and efficient.

Progestin-only pills have been widely used in the United States since the first one was approved in 1973. Like other oral contraceptives, they require a prescription from a health care provider or, in some states, a pharmacist.

The advisers' vote is timely, experts said at the meeting. Almost a year after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, and thus the constitutional right to an abortion, the need to expand contraceptive options has become more urgent, they said. Studies show that roughly half of all pregnancies in the United States each year are unintended.

"In the balance between benefit and risk, we have a hard time justifying not taking this action," Dr. Maria Coyle, the committee chairwoman and an associate clinical professor at the Ohio State University College of Pharmacy, said in the meeting. "The benefits are large; the drug is incredibly effective."

She added that "the risk of the medication itself is incredibly low for the vast majority of users, and the risk of unintended pregnancy, while real, is less than that of existing over-the-counter measures of birth control."

How the Pill Works

Opill, also known as a "mini pill," contains only progestin, a synthetic version of progesterone. It works primarily by thickening mucus in the cervix to make it harder for sperm to enter the uterus, said Dr. Katrina Heyrana, an OB-GYN at the family planning program at Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles.

It is also designed to prevent ovulation, but the low dose of progestin means that the pill doesn't consistently do that, Dr. Heyrana said. Roughly four in 10 women on the mini pill continue to ovulate, according to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

Each Opill box includes 28 pills, which, if taken at roughly the same time every day with no breaks between packs, are considered highly effective at preventing pregnancy, with a failure rate of around 7 percent. (This is comparable to combination contraceptive pills that contain both estrogen and progestin.) Research shows progestin-only pills are more effective than the birth control options available over the counter, such as condoms and spermicides, which have higher failure rates. Birth control pills are less effective than intrauterine devices or sterilizations.

If you are certain you are not pregnant, you can start taking the pill at any point during your menstrual cycle, Dr. Heyrana said. It should start to prevent pregnancies within 48 hours of taking the first pill, so you might need a backup contraception method within that window, she said.

Side Effects and Risks

Opill has fewer side effects and a lower risk profile than other birth control options, particularly combination pills, Dr. Carolyn Westhoff, a professor of reproductive health at Columbia University, said at the meeting.

The most common side effect is unscheduled bleeding throughout the cycle that is heavier than spotting and rarely follows any pattern, said Dr. Heyrana, "which can be quite bothersome for people."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that the combination oral contraceptive is associated with an increased risk for cardiovascular disease, hypertension and blood clots. In contrast, according to the C.D.C., the mini pill is not associated with many serious long-term risks.

Research has suggested that taking a progestin pill, like Opill, might exacerbate severe liver disease or breast cancer, so people who have had those conditions should avoid it.

The Cost

HRA Pharma has not yet revealed the price, but affordability is going to be one of the main sticking points for consumers, said Dana Singiser, co-founder of the Contraceptive Access Initiative, a nonprofit organization that supports expanded access to contraceptives.

"It is clearly a huge priority for the reproductive health community to make sure that the on-the-shelf price truly is affordable for the consumers who tend to have less access to health care," Ms. Singiser said.

The Affordable Care Act mandates that insurance companies fully cover prescribed contraceptives, and, Ms. Singiser said, reproductive rights activists are hoping that would extend to Opill, even if it's purchased over the counter. But that would require the Department of Health and Human Services to direct insurance companies to include Opill, Ms. Singiser said, and it's difficult to determine how long that will take.

Those who do have insurance and access to a pharmacy or a physician can still get a prescription for a mini pill to avoid any out-of-pocket costs, Ms. Singiser said.

Availability of the Pill

The pill could be available almost overnight, Ms. Singiser said. It would depend on how quickly HRA Pharma can get the product "on the shelves with the F.D.A.-approved label," she said.

In other words, theoretically by the end of the summer, she said, you could "go to the family planning aisle at a CVS or Walgreens or Rite Aid and — right next to the condoms and the emergency contraception — there should be a pack of Opill."

Ask Well

As I've gotten older, I've noticed more and more skin tags sprouting in odd places on my body. What are they, exactly? And is there anything I can (and should) do to get rid of them?



ERIC HELGAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

They can pop up in unusual places: on your neck, under your arms, maybe even around your groin.

And for many people, they can be extremely irritating — especially if they get caught on jewelry or clothing, or if they occasionally bleed.

Research suggests that more than half of adults will develop at least one skin tag during their lifetime.

The good news, said Dr. Angela Lamb, a dermatologist at Mount Sinai in New York City, is that they are harmless. "They're completely benign," she said. "They have zero malignant potential."

But because skin tags can be associated with other conditions, it's important to understand how to identify them and when to speak with a health care provider.

Skin tags are soft growths that protrude from the surface of your skin. They can vary in appearance but are usually about the size of a small pebble or a grain of rice, and can be flesh-colored or darker.

Because skin tags can sometimes resemble the lesions associated with skin cancers, it's often wise to see a doctor if you're not sure what kind of growth you have. "Anything that's concerning you, any new growth that's extending from the skin, it's a good idea just to get it checked out," Dr. Lamb said.

As for what causes skin tags, nobody really knows, Dr. Lamb said. They're more likely to pop up as you age and tend to appear on parts of the skin that rub against each other.

They are more common in those who are pregnant, so hormones could play a role, Dr. Lamb added. They also tend to be genetic, so "if your parents had skin tags, you'll probably have skin tags," she said.

Some research suggests that the presence of skin tags is associated with insulin resistance, a precursor to Type 2 diabetes.

"If you're getting a lot of them," said Dr. Whitney Bowe, a dermatologist based in Westchester County, N.Y., "you might want to bring it to the attention of your doctor," who may recommend blood work.

Because they don't pose any harm, there's no need to remove skin tags, Dr. Lamb said. However, some people like to remove them because they find them unattractive or annoying.

The safest way to remove a skin tag is with the help of a dermatologist, Dr. Bowe said, though she noted that skin tag removal typically is not covered by health insurance.

One method involves numbing the surrounding area with a shot of lidocaine, then cutting the tag off with sharp, curved scissors. The wound is then treated with a chemical substance that stops any bleeding and helps to prevent infection.

Another common in-office removal approach is electrodessication, Dr. Bowe said, which involves numbing the area with lidocaine and then using a special instrument to direct an electrical current to the skin tag, killing the tissue, she said.

In a third approach, known as cryotherapy, a physician dips a tweezer-like instrument into liquid nitrogen and pinches the base of the skin tag, which essentially destroys it and causes it to fall off within a few days, Dr. Bowe said. The freezing itself doesn't hurt, she said, but you might experience some pain as the tissue thaws afterward.

After a skin tag is removed by a doctor, it's best to cover the wound with a thin layer of an ointment such as petroleum jelly and a Band-Aid. The skin will usually heal within a week, Dr. Lamb said.

There are a handful of popular home remedies for removing skin tags, but dermatologists don't recommend them. One involves cutting off a skin tag's blood supply by tying a piece of string or dental floss around the base, causing it to die and fall off.

"The problem with doing that is that there's a high risk of infection," Dr. Bowe said, because germs often infiltrate the wound after the skin tag falls off.

Another popular yet ill-advised home approach involves dabbing an acid, such as apple cider vinegar or salicylic acid, on a skin tag. "You're literally burning the skin tag off the skin," Dr. Bowe explained. But "you also tend to burn the surrounding skin," she said, causing damage that can lead to a darkening of the skin, which can persist for months.

Dr. Lamb added that people can also experience strong reactions to the acid, including allergic reactions, which could cause scarring or an infection.

Although many people prefer to have their skin tags removed, managing them can sometimes feel like a game of whack-a-mole, Dr. Bowe said.

"If you're prone to skin tags," she said, "they will probably grow back, or you'll get new ones." *MELINDA WENNER MOYER*

More Help for Women at a Tough Time

Postpartum depression is a growing focus of research, with new treatments available.

By DANA G. SMITH



MIKYUNG LEE

In recent years, mental health struggles have become the leading cause of maternal mortality in the United States, primarily because of suicides and drug overdoses. It is estimated that one in eight new moms experiences postpartum depression, and some research has suggested that the prevalence climbed to as high as one in three during the early days of the pandemic.

Yet roughly half of the women who are struggling with their mental health after pregnancy don't receive treatment. Barriers to care include a lack of awareness about symptoms and treatments, an inability to access resources and stigma.

Postpartum depression has historically been underdiagnosed and under-researched, but recognition of the condition is finally growing. As a result, there are more treatment options available than ever before, including innovative therapeutic models and at least one new medication.

Many women experience mood swings in the days and weeks after childbirth because of the dramatic hormonal shifts that occur. Sometimes called the "baby blues," symptoms include feelings of sadness, anxiety, tearfulness or overwhelm; they typically subside within a week or two.

New mothers "feel like they're on a hormonal ride because they are," said Dr. Samantha Meltzer-Brody, the chair of the psychiatry department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, who helped found the university's perinatal psychiatry inpatient unit — the first in the country. "That happens to every single person that gives birth, and that's considered a normal part of the transition from pregnancy to the postpartum period."

Postpartum depression is different. It is defined as a major depressive episode that lasts at least two weeks and starts during the year after birth, usually emerging in the first few weeks.

"To meet criteria for a postpartum depressive episode, you must meet criteria for a major depressive episode," Dr. Meltzer-Brody said. Those include persistent low mood, low energy, feelings of worthlessness or guilt, suicidal thoughts and a loss of interest in things that were previously enjoyable.

The condition is typically screened for using a questionnaire known as the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale, which is ideally (but not always) administered at the six-week postpartum visit to the obstetrician's office. Pediatricians are also encouraged to ask about postpartum depression because they see the family more frequently in the year after birth.

Risk factors include a history of depression, a traumatic birth experience and lack of social support, said Dr. Latoya Frolov, a perinatal psychiatrist at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

Postpartum depression can affect not only the mother's health but also that of her baby. Some research has shown that infants born to depressed mothers gain less weight and have more illnesses and developmental delays (though some other studies have not). As a result, timely treatment is important.

The treatment a woman receives should depend on her score on the Edinburgh Scale, but all too often there is no follow-up care, either because adequate mental health resources aren't available or because she can't access them.

It's hard to make it to an appointment when you're overwhelmed, exhausted and depressed, especially if you don't have easy transportation or child care, Dr. Frolov said.

"When I see someone make it to an appointment with me, I am overjoyed, honestly, to see them in my office, because I know that often there's a lot that went into it."

THERAPY If a woman is found to have mild to moderate depression, she should quickly be referred to some sort of therapy.

Group therapy is often recommended for new moms who are struggling, and it can be one of the most powerful interventions, said Paige Bellenbaum, a licensed clinical social worker and the founding director of the Motherhood Center, a clinic in New York City that offers intensive outpatient care for women with postpartum depression.

"It's the support that women provide to one another," she said, "that helps them to feel so much less alone in this really, really challenging journey."

In one-on-one therapy, counselors often use approaches like cognitive behavioral therapy, dialectical behavioral therapy and interpersonal therapy, which provide women with skills to help them manage their emotions, avoid or reframe negative thoughts and improve communication with their partner.

MEDICATION For women who have moderate to severe postpartum depression, experts often recommend medication — most commonly selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, or S.S.R.I.s. There is limited research specifically testing S.S.R.I.s for postpartum depression, but one meta-analysis assessing six studies indicated that a little less than half of the women who take them see an improvement.

Traditionally, doctors have worried that these medications are unsafe for women who are pregnant or breastfeeding, but Dr. Frolov said the risks are small, especially compared with those associated with postpartum depression. She said Zoloft, in particular, is frequently prescribed because less medication is secreted into breast milk than with other S.S.R.I.s.

Dr. Frolov is trying to empower physicians who work with pregnant and postpartum women to feel more comfortable prescribing S.S.R.I.s, especially to women who are struggling but aren't able to see a mental health professional.

"I always encourage OBs to treat," she said. "It's not enough to screen."

NEW OPTIONS For women who don't respond to these therapies, more intensive treatment options are starting to become available, including full-day outpatient and inpatient facilities dedicated to maternal mental health, like the Motherhood Center and U.N.C.'s perinatal psychiatry unit.

The first medication specifically for postpartum depression also now exists, and it works differently from S.S.R.I.s. Treatment with the drug, called Brexanolone, causes a significant reduction in depression scores for about 70 percent of the women who receive it, said Dr. Meltzer-Brody, who ran the clinical trials at U.N.C.

Most notably, it works within 24 hours, compared with the weeks or months it takes to see a benefit from therapy or S.S.R.I.s.

While Brexanolone's efficacy is promising, it must be delivered in a hospital via an IV for 60 hours straight, which makes it extremely difficult to access. As a result, only a few hundred women, usually the most severe cases, have been treated with the drug since it was approved in 2019.

Experts are optimistic that a related fast-acting medication that can be delivered in a pill form may soon become available. The drug, called Zuranolone, is currently under review by the Food and Drug Administration, both for postpartum depression and major depressive disorder; a ruling could come as soon as Labor Day.

Perhaps even more important than the new medications themselves, Ms. Bellenbaum said, is the fact that the medical and scientific community is investing in research into postpartum depression.

"The field of maternal mental health is finally starting to matter," she said.

Proper Rest for Teenagers Is a Real Challenge

As adolescents grapple with insomnia, experts say small changes can be a big help.

By CATHERINE PEARSON



JUN CEN

With packed schedules, school days that begin at 8 a.m. and the lure of screens, it's little wonder that many adolescents in the United States don't get enough sleep.

National estimates suggest about six in 10 middle-school students get less than the recommended nine to 12 hours of sleep a night, while about seven in 10 high schoolers clock less than the recommended eight to 10 hours. And more than one in five adolescents grapple with insomnia, characterized by problems falling asleep, staying asleep or getting sufficient quality sleep.

"There are two basic things that happen" when teenagers hit puberty, said Dr. Judith Owens, the director of the Center for Pediatric Sleep Disorders at Boston Children's Hospital. "The first is that there's a shift in their natural circadian rhythms, so their natural fall asleep time and wake time shift later — by up to a couple of hours. The second thing that happens is their sleep drive slows." So not only do adolescents want to stay up later, but their bodies also are actually capable of doing so, she explained.

Despite these biological shifts, experts stress that sleep loss is not a normal or natural part of adolescence, and the American Academy of Pediatrics has said that insufficient sleep is one of the most pressing health risks in adolescents, pointing to consequences like impaired mood and attention and diminished impulse control.

The New York Times spoke to Dr. Owens and other experts in adolescent sleep and mental health about how to help teenagers who are struggling with sleep.

Change One Poor Sleep Habit

Though the data on teenage sleep deprivation is stark, Dr. Sonal Malhotra, an assistant professor of pulmonary and sleep medicine at Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital, offered some reassurance: Many of the teenagers she treats do not have what she would consider true chronic insomnia. Instead, they are simply plagued by poor sleep hygiene.

Dr. Malhotra shares that not to be dismissive of the challenges many teenagers face around sleep, but to reassure families that small changes can often make a big difference. She urges adolescents to make one adjustment to their sleep routine that they think will be doable and quite likely beneficial — ensuring their room is dark and comfortable, for instance, or avoiding having a large meal or caffeine relatively close to bedtime.

"Targeting everything at once isn't ideal," Dr. Malhotra said, adding that she tells teenagers if they can change one habit even 50 percent of the week, she considers it a win.

Consider Your Screen Use

"We have truckloads of research showing how destructive technology is to sleep," said Lisa Damour, a clinical psychologist and the author of "The Emotional Lives of Teenagers." She is adamant that no one — adults included — should have a phone in their bedroom at night. Dr. Damour urged parents to set that rule early on: "At the time that a child is asking for a phone, they will agree to anything," she chuckled. "Parents should not squander the massive leverage they have."

But if that's not feasible, there are ways to lessen the damage of nighttime screen use.

Passive use, like watching a show, is better than active use, like texting or gaming, said Dave Anderson, a clinical psychologist with the Child Mind Institute. What a teenager watches and what they watch it on matters, too: For instance, a sitcom is better than a suspenseful show, he said. And it is preferable to watch on a small screen rather than a 60-inch TV, which emits more blue light.

"Exposure to light, particularly blue light, suppresses the release of melatonin," Dr. Owens said. "And teenagers are even more sensitive to that suppression of melatonin."

If teenagers are going to be looking at a computer or another device late into the evening, Dr. Owens recommends giving them blue-light blocking glasses or having them use an app to curb blue light exposure. "It doesn't reduce the cognitive stimulation of doing homework at 10:30 at night," she said. "But it does help somewhat."

Be Mindful of Melatonin

Experts largely discourage the use of melatonin to help teenagers sleep. The A.A.P. says it should only be given to kids after a discussion with their pediatrician. The group says that further research is needed, as there are questions about how it might affect growth and development, especially during puberty.

"It's definitely something that you need to talk to a health care provider about to really understand dosing and timing," Dr. Malhotra said, adding that there is very little regulation of melatonin. "It's just a lot more complex than I think people realize."

Pros and Cons of Napping

Teenagers are known for wanting to sleep late on the weekends, but experts warn it can hamper weekday sleep. "Come Sunday night, they haven't been awake long enough to fall asleep at a reasonable time in order to get up for school on Monday morning, and the whole thing just kind of gets out of control," Dr. Owens said.

She and Dr. Damour said it's OK for teenagers to experiment with sleeping in a little, but families should keep a close eye on its effect on weekday rest.

While naps cannot entirely make up for a bad night's sleep (or a bad stretch of sleep), Dr. Owens said she is a "relative fan" of "strategic napping" to help teenagers recharge. By that, she means a nap of 30 minutes or less, ideally at some point between 3 and 5 p.m., when there is a natural lull in a teenager's circadian rhythm.

Help Them Ruminate Less

Adolescents, like adults, can get caught in a mental loop that fuels sleeplessness: I still have so much work to do . . . If I don't get enough sleep, I will fail my test tomorrow . . . I couldn't sleep last night, so tonight will be a disaster, too.

'Exposure to light, particularly blue light, suppresses the release of melatonin. And teenagers are even more sensitive to that suppression of melatonin.'

DR. JUDITH OWENS
BOSTON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

To help curb rumination, Dr. Malhotra recommends teenagers keep a journal where they can jot down what they have already accomplished that day and what the plan is for tomorrow, along with any worries they may have.

At night, parents should let their kids know that if they're lying awake for more than 20 or 30 minutes, they should get out of bed and do something relaxing, like read a book or listen to calming music.

Bigger picture, parents should take a critical look at whether their child's schedule is simply too packed, Dr. Anderson said.

He and others also noted that parents should reach out to a primary care physician or mental health provider if they are concerned by prolonged sleep issues or feel their child is grappling with unmanageable stress.

Still, Dr. Anderson said that parents can help alleviate some of the pressure on teenagers by showing them compassion and pushing back against the kind of all-or-nothing thinking that contributes to the stress many of them feel.

If you repeatedly tell a teenager, "'Honey, I want you to know that no one grade, no activity, no one missed social event is going to make or break your life,'" he said, that can help.

How to Evaluate An Exercise Influencer

Research suggests that many fitness Instagram accounts risk doing more harm than good.

By DANIELLE FRIEDMAN

According to some estimates, Instagram is home to around 50,000 fitness influencers, most claiming to have the secrets to a healthy lifestyle. While some share science-backed helpful tips, others promote fitness advice that's misguided at best and dangerous at worst.

In a new study, researchers found that nearly two-thirds of the 100 most popular "fitfluencers" — a term that can describe any influencer who posts content related to fitness — lacked sound advice or posted messages that could negatively affect people's mental and physical health by, say, promoting exercise as a tool to become skinnier.

"Much of what could be called 'fitfluencer' content is really just 'thin-spiration' in disguise," said Renee Engeln, a professor of psychology at Northwestern University who studies how media influences body image and who was not involved in the research.

Several previous studies have shown that exposure to images that encourage a specific physique is correlated with a dip in body satisfaction, mood and self-perceived sexual attractiveness. It has also been linked to disordered eating.

Being able to distinguish between health-promoting accounts and potentially harmful ones can be challenging, even for researchers, Dr. Engeln said.

"An influencer might post a useful tutorial on how to safely do squats," she wrote in an email, "but then follow it up with content promoting ineffective (or even dangerous) weight loss supplements."

So how can you find credible accounts? What should you look for when deciding which fitfluencers to follow? Here are four rules of thumb from experts.

One Crucial Question

Stephanie Roth-Goldberg, a clinical social worker and therapist in New York who works with athletes, suggested asking yourself: Does this fitness influencer make you feel good in your own skin?

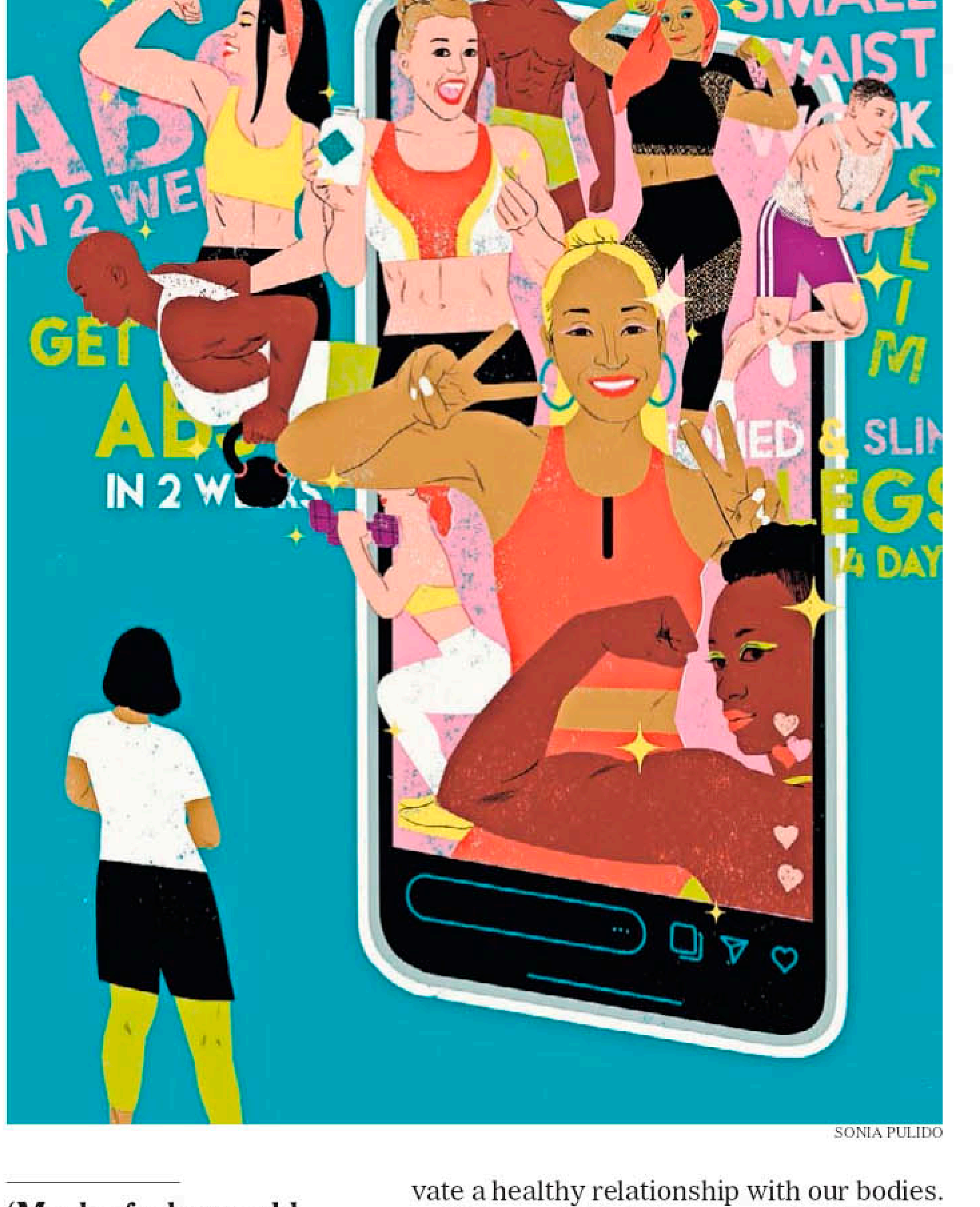
If browsing the account leads you to feel guilt or body shame, she said, that should be an automatic unfollow, as research has shown that these feelings can fuel unhealthy fitness habits and undermine both the physical and psychological benefits of exercise.

If you're a parent of teenagers with social media accounts, it's important to guide them through the same process, according to newly issued recommendations from the American Psychological Association. The group urges parents to train kids to question the accuracy of social media content — before they even open accounts — and to discourage them from comparing their bodies with what they see online.

"One of the best things parents can do is sit with their kids and open up a conversation" about social media, Ms. Roth-Goldberg said. Not only can this help parents understand what their kids are getting out of each account, it can also provide kids with language to describe how what they see makes them feel.

What Your Body Can Do

Take a close look at the images, videos and text featured on an account. When we are exposed to content that encourages us to exercise for functionality, strength and mental health, we are more likely to cultivate a healthy relationship with our bodies.



SONIA PULIDO

'Much of what could be called "fitfluencer" content is really just "thin-spiration" in disguise.'

RENEE ENGELN
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Make a point to follow accounts that focus on finding joy and confidence in movement itself, but be wary of fitfluencers who share before-and-after photos that highlight fat loss, or images, like glistening abs or disembodied legs, that treat body parts like objects that need to be perfected.

Kelly K. Roberts, a running coach and body-positive fitness influencer based in New York City who has nearly 70,000 followers on Instagram, initially built a following by posting images that charted how her physical appearance changed through running. But when she discovered that her own social media habits were causing her to fixate on her weight, she switched to posting about running for the fun of running.

"Any time you post about your body, you're giving people an opportunity to self-compare and self-objectify," she said. "You'll rarely see me talking about my body anymore. I just exist in it."

To find accounts that focus on movement, search hashtags like #joyfulmovement, #intuitivemovement, #inclusivefitness and #bodypositivefitness.

Official Credentials

You're best off following professionals who have formally trained in the field you are interested in, said Cedric Bryant, the president and chief science officer of the American Council on Exercise.

"You can't rely on the number of likes that a person has or number of followers as being an indicator of the quality of their advice," he said.

Instead, look for references to their credentials and experience, whether it's a master's degree or a coaching certificate. Be wary of fitfluencers who offer advice outside their expertise, Dr. Bryant said, particularly regarding diet and nutrition.

"Even if a person has fitness credentials, if they don't also have proper training in nutrition, I would tread carefully," he said. "Make sure they're staying in their lane."

A Range of Abilities

Fitness looks different for everyone, despite long-held cultural misconceptions about exercise and body shape and size. "Seeing a range of body types engaging in fitness activities is a key step in moving away from the stereotype that fitness is just for young, thin, completely able-bodied people," Dr. Engeln said.

The more our fitness feeds feature a diversity of bodies and the more we expose ourselves to a diversity of bodies moving, the more we can expand our ideas about what we are capable of, she said, and "feel more comfortable trying new things."

METHODOLOGY

Tricking Expectant Condors, and Proud of It

Researchers swapped out eggs with electronics-filled fakes to improve birds' breeding success.

By EMILY ANTHES

For two months this spring, a pair of California condors carefully tended to a single, enormous egg. They took turns sitting on the egg to keep it warm, and they routinely rotated the egg, a behavior believed to promote proper chick development.

What the birds, part of a breeding population at the Oregon Zoo, did not appear to notice was that the egg was a high-tech fraud. The plastic shell, made with a 3-D printer, was stuffed with sensors designed to surreptitiously monitor conditions inside the condors' nest.

For weeks, the dummy egg tracked the nest temperature, logged the birds' egg-turning behaviors and recorded the ambient sound. The zoo hopes this data will allow it to better replicate natural conditions in the artificial incubators that are key to its condor breeding efforts.

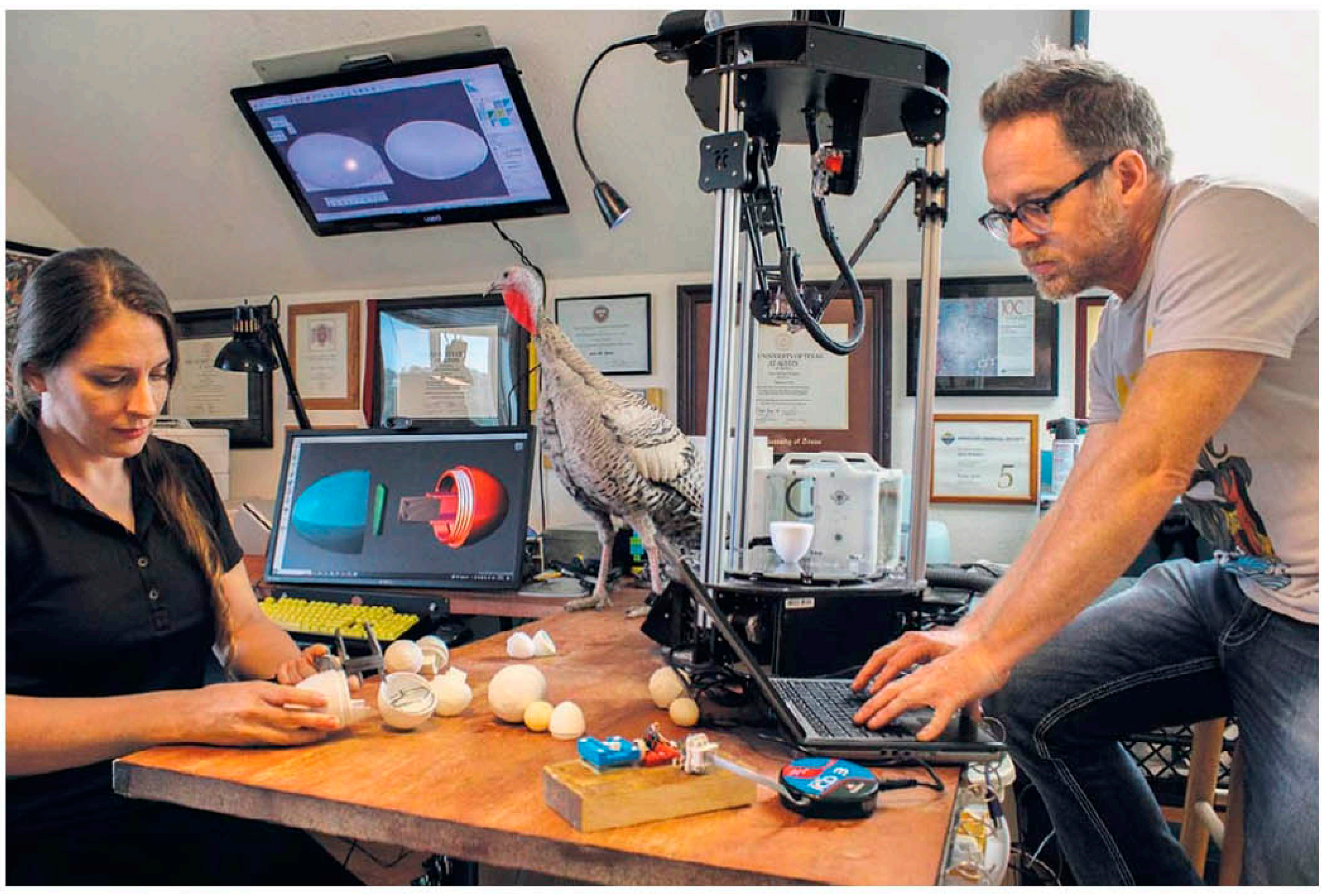
California condors, which can have wingspans of nearly 10 feet, are critically endangered. So every year, when the birds lay their eggs, the zoo whisks them out of the nest and into the safety of the incubators. This strategy has several advantages, prompting some pairs to lay a second egg, enabling the zoo to monitor embryo development and protecting the fragile embryos from condor rowdiness.

"During breeding season, tensions tend to run high," said Kelli Walker, the zoo's senior condor keeper. "And occasionally pairs will get into a fight in the nest room and by accident injure the egg." (The chicks are returned to the nest when they begin hatching.)

The more closely the zoo can replicate natural conditions in the incubators, the more successful it will be. So Ms. Walker enlisted Scott Shaffer, an animal ecologist and bird researcher at San Jose State University, and Constance Woodman, a bird scientist and expert on conservation technology at Texas A&M University, who together have made data-logging smart eggs for various bird species.

Here's how they brought the condor eggs into being.

Methodology is a feature that explains the process behind a scientific endeavor.



1

Design the Eggs

Dr. Woodman (left, with Sean Michael Ragan, who programmed data loggers) created a digital model of the imitation condor egg. The shell had to be thin enough for the internal sensors to detect temperature changes but robust enough to withstand potential avian abuse. (A macaw once threw one of Dr. Woodman's eggs out of its nest, two stories off the ground.) To ensure the egg would not pop open, she designed threaded shell halves that screw together tightly. "It will stay closed unless you've got thumbs," she said. "Birds do not have thumbs, so we're in good shape."

2

Print the Shells

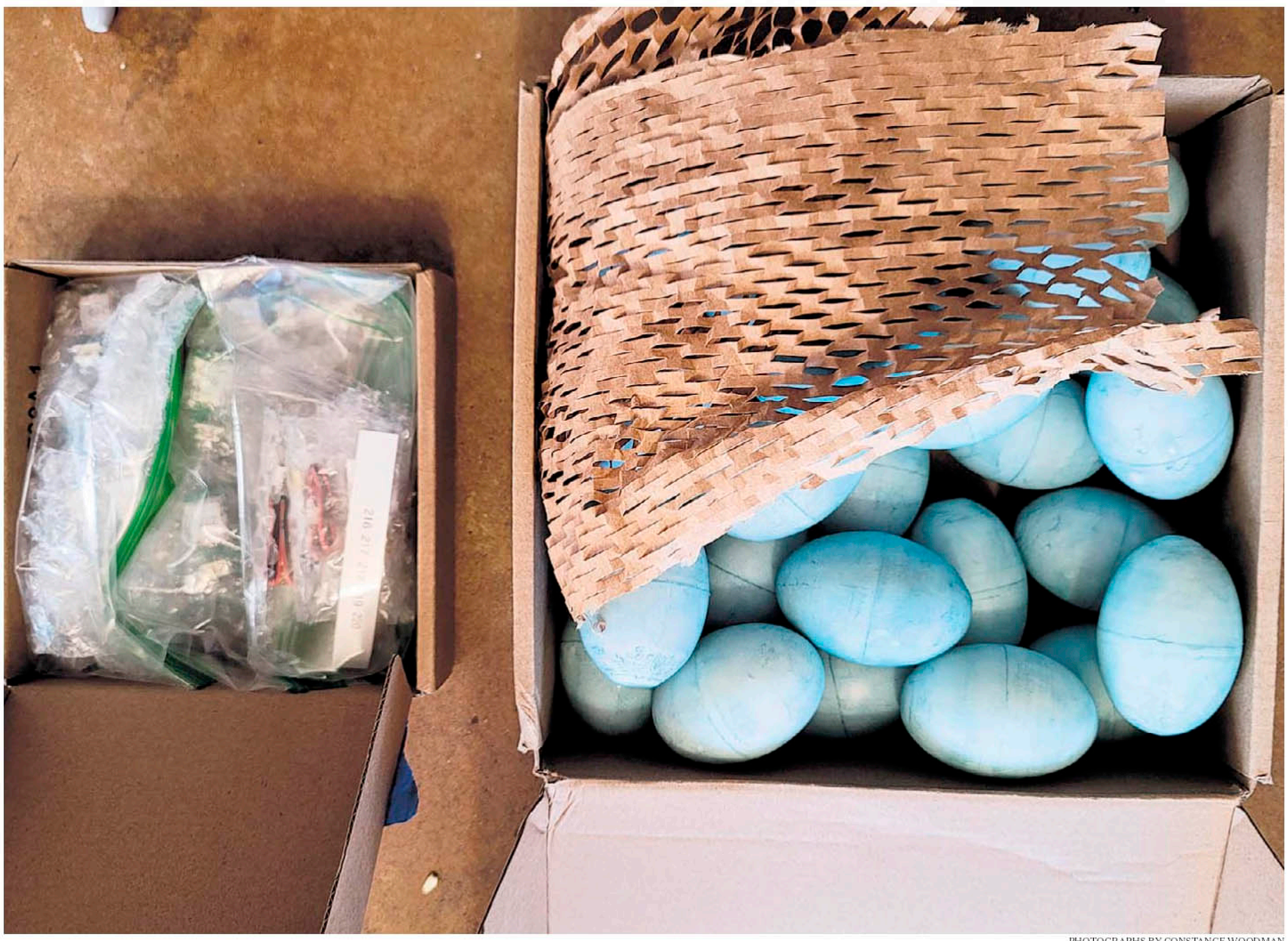
Dr. Woodman used a 3-D printer loaded with a plastic selected specifically to be safe for birds, which might spend months sitting on the eggs. "I really, really don't want to mean well and poison a bird," she said. Printing each shell took 13 hours.

3

Enlist the Test Turkey

To ensure that the egg was not prone to spinning or wobbling, Dr. Woodman gave it to Loretta, her litter-box-trained "house turkey," she said. "If Loretta doesn't like it, she won't sit on it."





PHOTOGRAPHS BY CONSTANCE WOODMAN



MICHAEL DURHAM

6

Weigh Them Down

Some birds will reject eggs that are abnormally light. So Ms. Walker used a hot glue gun to attach rocks to the inside of the egg, bringing its weight to more than half a pound.

4

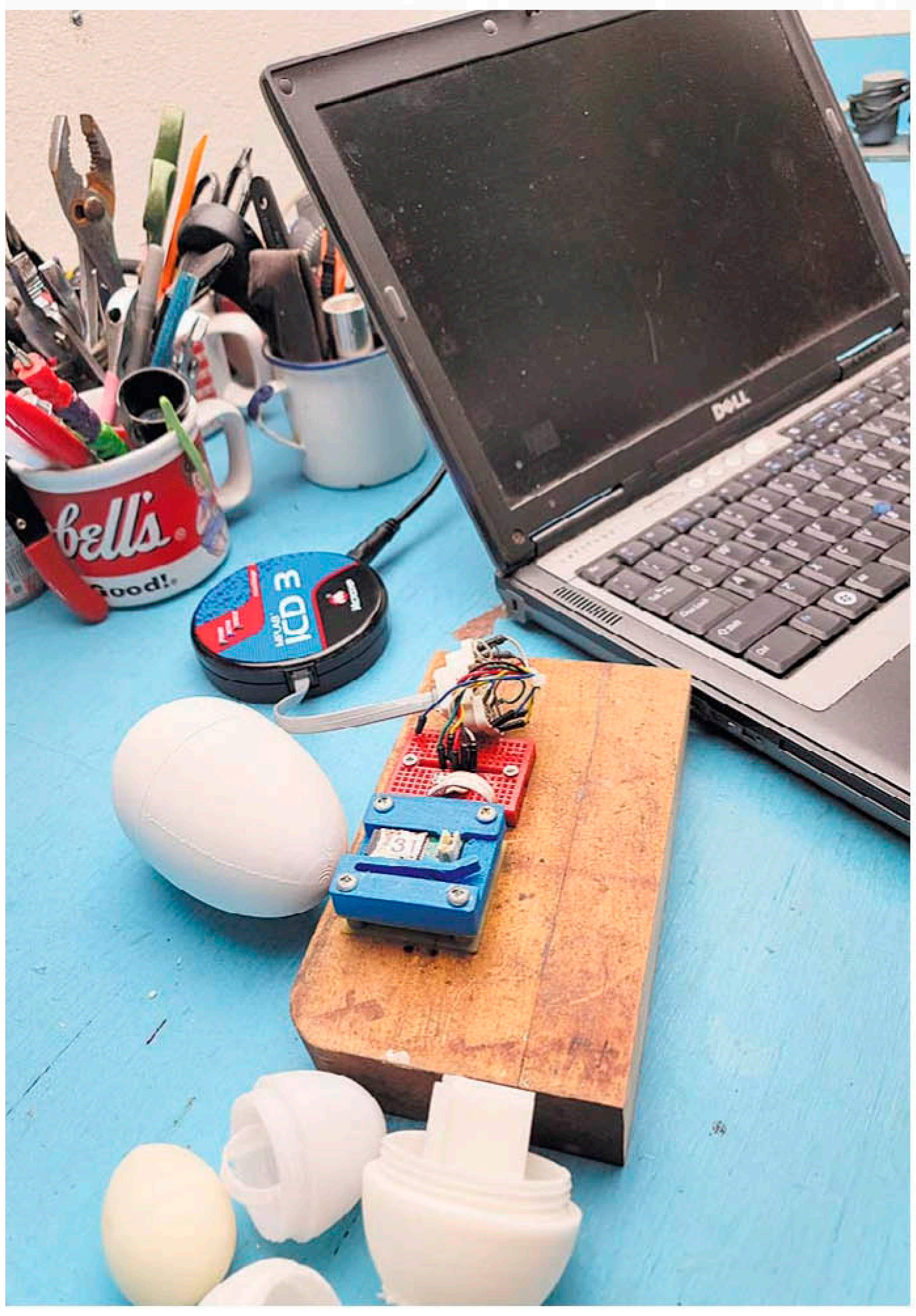
Dye the Eggs

The color of bird eggs varies by species, and Dr. Woodman and Dr. Shaffer always try to replicate it as closely as possible. To match the subtle, blue-green tint of condor eggs, Dr. Woodman dipped the shells into a pot of a nontoxic dye intended for children's clothing.

5

Add the Electronics

Small data loggers tucked inside the shells can track the temperature and movement of the eggs. An audio recorder captures the sounds in the nest, which the zoo will play back to the eggs in the incubator. "Developing embryos can hear things through their shells," Ms. Walker said. She used electrical tape to cover the lights on the electronics, "otherwise it would have looked like a flashing Christmas egg."





7

Make the Swap

The first condor parents to receive a smart egg this year were a female known only as No. 762 and her mate, Alishaw. "He's not what you would call a traditionally fantastic dad," Ms. Walker said. "He'll incubate as long as he has to, but he's not thrilled about it." (762's devotion to him, however, remains undimmed. "She's kind of a ride-or-die with Alishaw," Ms. Walker said.) When both birds left the nest, zoo staff moved their real egg to an incubator and replaced it with the fake one. The condors did not seem to notice. (Their chick, which has since hatched, is back with its parents and doing well, Ms. Walker said.)



MICHAEL DURHAM

8

Analyze the Data

When the breeding season is over, Dr. Shaffer and Ms. Walker will analyze the data. The findings will inform future incubator settings and, the team hopes, help bring more California condor chicks safely into the world. "It's just a really cool use of technology that will only get better," Dr. Shaffer said.